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A

CAREFUL AND STRICT

INQUIRY

INTO THE

MODERN PREVAILING NOTIONS

OF THAT

FREEDOM OF WILL,

WHICH IS SUPPOSED TO BE ESSENTIAL

TO

MORAL AGENCY, VIRTUE AND VICE, REWARD AND PUNISHMENT, PRAISE AND BLAME.

BY JONATHAN EDWARDS, A. M.

Rom. ix. 16. *It is not of him that willeth.*

ALBANY:

PRINTED FOR AND SOLD BY WHITING, BACKUS & WHITING,

NO. 45, STATE-STREET:

SOLD ALSO BY THEM AT THEIR STORES IN SCHENECTADY, UTICA AND CANANDAIGUA.

1804.

THE

PREFACE.

MANY find much fault with the calling profeſſing Chriſtians, that differ one from another in ſome matters of opinion, by diſtinct *names;* eſpecially calling them by the names of particular men, who have diſtinguiſhed themſelves as maintainers and promoters of thoſe opinions; as the calling ſome profeſſing Chriſtians *Arminians*, from Arminius; others *Arians*, from Arius; others *Socinians*, from Socinus, and the like. They think it unjuſt in itſelf; as it ſeems to ſuppoſe and ſuggeſt, that the perſons marked out by theſe names, received thoſe doctrines which they entertain, out of regard *to*, and reliance *on*, thoſe men after whom they are named; as though they made them their rule; in the ſame manner, as the followers of CHRIST are called *Chriſtians;* after his name, whom they regard and depend upon, as their great Head and Rule. Whereas, this is an unjuſt and groundleſs imputation on thoſe that go under the fore-mentioned denominations. Thus (ſay they) there is not the leaſt ground to ſuppoſe that the chief Divines, who embrace the ſcheme of doctrine which is, by many, called *Arminianiſm*, believe it the more, becauſe Arminius believed it: and that there is no reaſon to think any other, than that they ſincerely and impartially ſtudy the holy Scriptures, and enquire after the mind of Chriſt, with as much judgment and ſincerity, as any of thoſe that call them by theſe names; that they ſeek after truth, and are not careful whether they think exactly as Arminius did; yea, that, in ſome things, they actually differ from him.

This practice is alſo eſteemed actually injurious on this account, that it is ſuppoſed naturally to lead the multitude to imagine the difference between perſons thus named and others, to be greater than it is; yea, as though it were ſo great, that they muſt be, as it were, another ſpecies of beings. And they object againſt it as ariſing from an uncharitable, narrow, contracted ſpirit; which, they ſay, commonly inclines perſons to confine all that is good to themſelves, and their own party, and to make a wide diſtinction between themſelves and others, and ſtigmatize thoſe that differ from them with odious names. They ſay, moreover, that the keeping up ſuch a diſtinction of names has a direct tendency to uphold diſtance and diſaffection, and keep alive mutual hatred among Chriſtians, who ought all to be united in friendſhip and charity, however they cannot, in all things, think alike.

I confeſs theſe things are very plauſible. And I will not deny, that there are ſome unhappy conſequences of this diſtinction of names, and that men's infirmities and evil diſpoſitions often make an ill improvement of it. But yet, I humbly conceive, theſe objections are carried far beyond reaſon. The generality of mankind are diſpoſed enough, and a great deal too much, to uncharitableneſs, and to be cenſorious and bitter towards thoſe that differ from them in religious opinions: which evil temper of mind will take occaſion to exert itſelf from many things in themſelves innocent, uſeful and neceſſary. But yet there is no neceſſity to ſuppoſe, that the thus diſtinguiſhing perſons of different opinions by different names, ariſes mainly from an uncharitable ſpirit. It may ariſe from the diſpoſition there is in mankind (whom God has diſtinguiſhed with an ability and inclination for ſpeech) to improve the benefit of language, in the proper uſe and deſign of names, given

to things which they have often occaſion to ſpeak of, or ſignify their minds about; which is to enable them to expreſs their ideas with eaſe and expedition, without being encumbered with an obſcure and difficult circumlocution. And the thus diſtinguiſhing perſons of different opinions in religious matters may imply nor infer, any more than that there is a difference, and that the difference is ſuch as we find we have often occaſion to take notice of, and make mention of. That which we have frequent occaſion to ſpeak of, (whatever it be, that gives the occaſion) this wants a name: and it is always a defect in language, in ſuch caſes, to be obliged to make uſe of a deſcription, inſtead of a name. Thus we have often occaſion to ſpeak of thoſe who are the deſcendants of the ancient inhabitants of France, who were ſubjects or heads of the government of that land, and ſpake the language peculiar to it; in diſtinction from the deſcendants of the inhabitants of Spain, who belonged to that community, and ſpake the language of that country. And therefore we find the great need of diſtinct names to ſignify theſe different ſorts of people, and the great convenience of thoſe diſtinguiſhing words, *French* and *Spaniards*; by which the ſignification of our minds is quick and eaſy, and our ſpeech is delivered from the burden of a continual reiteration of diffuſe deſcriptions, with which it muſt otherwiſe be embarraſſed.

That the difference of the opinions of thoſe who, in their general ſcheme of divinity, agree with theſe two noted men, Calvin and Arminius, is a thing there is often occaſion to ſpeak of, is what the practice of the latter itſelf confeſſes; who are often, in their diſcourſes and writings, taking notice of the ſuppoſed abſurd and pernicious opinions of the former ſort. And therefore the making uſe of different names in this caſe cannot reaſonably be ob-

jected againſt, or condemned, as a thing which muſt come from ſo bad a cauſe as they aſſign. It is eaſy to be accounted for, without ſuppoſing it to ariſe from any other ſource, than the exigence and natural tendency of the ſtate of things; conſidering the faculty and diſpoſition God has given to mankind, to expreſs things which they have frequent occaſion to mention, by certain diſtinguiſhing names. It is an effect that is ſimilar to what we ſee ariſe, in innumerable caſes which are parallel, where the cauſe is not at all blame-worthy.

Nevertheleſs, at firſt, I had thoughts of carefully avoiding the uſe of the appellation, *Arminian*, in this treatiſe. But I ſoon found I ſhould be put to great difficulty by it; and that my diſcourſe would be ſo encumbered with an often repeated circumlocution, inſtead of a name, which would expreſs the thing intended, as well and better, that I altered my purpoſe. And therefore I muſt aſk the excuſe of ſuch as are apt to be offended with things of this nature, that I have ſo freely uſed the term *Arminian* in the following diſcourſe. I profeſs it to be without any deſign, to ſtigmatize perſons of any ſort with a name of reproach, or at all to make them appear more odious. If, when I had occaſion to ſpeak of thoſe Divines who are commonly called by this name, I had, inſtead of ſtyling them *Arminians*, called them *theſe men*, as Dr. Whitby does *Calviniſtic* Divines; it probably would not have been taken any better, or thought to ſhew a better temper, or more good manners. I have done as I would be done by, in this matter. However the term *Calviniſtic* is, in theſe days, among moſt, a term of greater reproach than the term *Arminian*; yet I ſhould not take it at all amiſs, to be called a *Calviniſt*, for diſtinction's ſake: though I utterly diſclaim a dependence on Calvin, or believing the doctrines which I hold, becauſe he believed and

taught them; and cannot juſtly be charged with believing in every thing juſt as he taught.

But, leſt I ſhould really be an occaſion of injury to ſome perſons, I would here give notice, that though I generally ſpeak of that doctrine, concerning Free-Will and moral Agency, which I oppoſe, as an *Arminian* doctrine; yet I would not be underſtood, as aſſerting that every Divine or Author, whom I have occaſion to mention as maintaining that doctrine, was properly an *Arminian*, or one of that ſort which is commonly called by that name.—Some of them went far beyond the *Arminians:* and I would by on means charge *Arminians* in general with all the corrupt doctrine, which theſe maintained. Thus, for inſtance, it would be very injurious, if I ſhould rank *Arminian* Divines, in general, with ſuch Authors as Mr. Chubb. I doubt not, many of them have ſome of his doctrines in abhorrence; though he agrees, for the moſt part, with *Arminians*, in his notion of the Freedom of the Will. And, on the other hand, though I ſuppoſe this notion to be a leading article in the *Arminian* ſcheme, that which, if purſued in its conſequences, will truly infer, or naturally lead to all the reſt; yet I do not charge all that have held this doctrine, with being *Arminians*. For whatever may be the conſequences of the doctrine really, yet ſome that hold this doctrine, may not own nor ſee theſe conſequences; and it would be unjuſt, in many inſtances, to charge every Author with believing and maintaining all the real conſequences of his avowed doctrines. And I deſire it may be particularly noted, that though I have occaſion, in the following Diſcourſe, often to mention the Author of the book, entitled *An Eſſay on the Freedom of the Will in God and the Creature*, as holding that notion of Freedom of Will, which I oppoſe; yet I do not mean to call him an *Arminian:* how-

ever, in that doctrine he agrees with *Arminians*, and departs from the current and general opinion of *Calviniſts*. If the Author of that Eſſay be the ſame as it is commonly aſcribed to, he, doubtleſs, was not one that ought to bear that name. But however good a Divine he was in many reſpects, yet that particular *Arminian* doctrine which he maintained, is never the better for being held by ſuch an one; nor is there leſs need of oppoſing it on that account; but rather is there the more need of it; as it will be likely to have the more pernicious influence, for being taught by a Divine of his name and character; ſuppoſing the doctrine to be wrong, and in itſelf to be of an ill tendency.

I have nothing further to ſay by way of preface; but only to beſpeak the Reader's candor, and calm attention to what I have written. The ſubject is of ſuch importance, as to *demand* attention, and the moſt thorough conſideration. Of all kinds of knowledge that we can ever obtain, the knowledge of God, and the knowledge of ourſelves, are the moſt important. As religion is the great buſineſs, for which we are created, and on which our happineſs depends; and as religion conſiſts in an intercourſe between ourſelves and our Maker; and ſo has its foundation in God's nature and ours, and in the relation that God and we ſtand in to each other; therefore a true knowledge of both muſt be needful, in order to true religion. But the knowledge of ourſelves conſiſts chiefly in right apprehenſions concerning thoſe two chief faculties of our nature, the *Underſtanding* and *Will*. Both are very important: yet the ſcience of the latter muſt be confeſſed to be of greateſt moment; inaſmuch as all virtue and religion have their ſeat more immediately in the Will, conſiſting more eſpecially in right acts and habits of this faculty. And the grand queſtion about the Freedom of the Will, is

the main point that belongs to the ſcience of the Will. Therefore, I ſay, the importance of this ſubject greatly *demands* the attention of Chriſtians, and eſpecially of Divines. But as to my manner of handling the ſubject, I will be far from preſuming to ſay, that it is ſuch as *demands* the attention of the reader to what I have written. I am ready to own, that in this matter I depend on the reader's *courteſy*. But only thus far I may have ſome colour for putting in a *claim;* that if the reader be diſpoſed to paſs his cenſure on what I have written, I may be fully and patiently heard, and well attended to, before I am condemned. However, this is what I would humbly *aſk* of my readers; together with the prayers of all ſincere lovers of truth, that I may have much of that Spirit which Chriſt promiſed his diſciples, which guides into all truth; and that the bleſſed and powerful influences of this Spirit would make truth victorious in the world.

A

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PART I.

Wherein are explained and ſtated various Terms *and* Things *belonging to the Subject of the enſuing Diſcourſe.*

SECTION I.

Concerning the Nature of the WILL.

IT may poſſibly be thought, that there is no great need of going about to define or deſcribe the *Will*; this word being generally as well underſtood as any other words we can uſe to explain it: and ſo perhaps it would be, had not philoſophers, metaphyſicians and polemic divines brought the matter into obſcurity by the things they have ſaid of it. But ſince it is ſo, I think it may be of ſome uſe, and will tend to the greater clearneſs in the following diſcourſe, to ſay a few things concerning it.

And therefore I obſerve, that the *Will* (without any metaphyſical refining) is plainly, *That by which the mind chooſes any thing.* The faculty of the *Will* is that faculty or power or principle of mind by which it is capable of *chooſing*: an act of the *Will* is the ſame as an act of *chooſing* or *choice.*

If any think it is a more perfect definition of the Will, to ſay, that it is that by which the ſoul either

chooſes or *refuſes;* I am content with it: though I think that it is enough to ſay, it is that by which the ſoul chooſes: for in every act of Will whatſoever, the mind chooſes one thing rather than another; it chooſes ſomething rather than the contrary, or rather than the want or non-exiſtence of that thing. So in every act of refuſal, the mind chooſes the abſence of the thing refuſed; the poſitive and the negative are ſet before the mind for its choice, and it chooſes the negative; and the mind's making its choice in that caſe is properly the act of the Will; the Will's determining between the two is a voluntary determining; but that is the ſame thing as making a choice. So that whatever names we call the act of the Will by *chooſing*, *refuſing*, *approving*, *diſapproving*, *liking*, *diſliking*, *embracing*, *rejecting*, *determining*, *directing*, *commanding*, *forbidding*, *inclining* or being *averſe*, a *being pleaſed* or *diſpleaſed with;* all may be reduced to this of *chooſing*. For the ſoul to act *voluntarily*. is evermore to act *electively*.

Mr. Locke* ſays, "The Will ſignifies nothing "but a power or ability to *prefer* or *chooſe*." And in the foregoing page ſays, "The word *preferring* "ſeems beſt to expreſs the act of volition;" but adds, that "it does it not preciſely; for (ſays he) "though a man would prefer flying to walking, "yet who can ſay he ever wills it?" But the inſtance he mentions does not prove that there is any thing elſe in *willing*, but merely *preferring*: for it ſhould be conſidered what is the next and immediate object of the Will, with reſpect to a man's walking, or any other external action; which is not being removed from one place to another; on the earth, or through the air; theſe are remoter objects of preference; but ſuch or ſuch an immediate exertion of himſelf. The thing nextly choſen or pre-

*Human Underſtanding. Edit. 7. vol. i. p. 197.

ferred when a man wills to walk, is not his being removed to such a place where he would be, but such an exertion and motion of his legs and feet, &c. in order to it. And his willing such an alteration in his body in the present moment, is nothing else but his choosing or preferring such an alteration in his body at such a moment, or his liking it better than the forbearance of it. And God has so made and established the human nature, the soul being united to a body in proper state, that the soul preferring or choosing such an immediate exertion or alteration of the body, such an alteration instantaneously follows. There is nothing else in the actions of my mind, that I am conscious of while I walk, but only my preferring or choosing, through successive moments, that there should be such alterations of my external sensations and motions; together with a concurring habitual expectation that it will be so; having ever found by experience, that on such an immediate preference, such sensations and motions do actually, instantaneously, and constantly arise. But it is not so in the case of flying: though a man may be said remotely to choose or prefer flying; yet he does not choose or prefer, incline to or desire, under circumstances in view, any immediate exertion of the members of his body in order to it; because he has no expectation that he should obtain the desired end by any such exertion; and he does not prefer or incline to any bodily exertion or effort under this apprehended circumstance, of its being wholly in vain. So that if we carefully distinguish the proper objects of the several acts of the Will, it will not appear by this, and such like instances, that there is any difference between *volition* and *preference*; or that a man's choosing, liking best, or being best pleased with a thing, are not the same with his willing that thing; as they seem to be according to those general and

more natural motions of men, according to which language is formed. Thus an act of the Will is commonly expreſſed by *its pleaſing a man* to do thus or thus; and a man doing as he *wills*, and doing as he *pleaſes*, are the ſame thing in common ſpeech.

Mr. Locke* ſays, "The Will is perfectly diſtinguiſhed from Deſire; which in the very ſame "action may have a quite contrary tendency from "that which our Wills ſet us upon. A man (ſays "he) whom I cannot deny, may oblige me to uſe "perſuaſions to another, which, at the ſame time I "am ſpeaking, I may wiſh may not prevail on him. "In this caſe it is plain the Will and Deſire run "counter." I do not ſuppoſe, that *Will* and *Deſire* are words of preciſely the ſame ſignification: *Will* ſeems to be a word of a more general ſignification, extending to things preſent and abſent. *Deſire* reſpects ſomething abſent. I may prefer my preſent ſituation and poſture, ſuppoſe ſitting ſtill, or having my eyes open, and ſo may will it. But yet I cannot think they are ſo entirely diſtinct, that they can ever be properly ſaid to run counter. A man never, in any inſtance, wills any thing contrary to his deſires, or deſires any thing contrary to his Will. The forementioned inſtance, which Mr. Locke produces, does not prove that he ever does. He may, on ſome conſideration or other, will to utter ſpeeches which have a tendency to perſuade another, and ſtill may deſire that they may not perſuade him: but yet his Will and Deſire does not run counter at all: the thing which he wills, the very ſame he deſires; and he does not will a thing, and deſire the contrary in any particular. In this inſtance, it is not carefully obſerved, what is the thing willed, and what is the thing deſired: if it were, it would be found that

* Hum. Und. vol. 1, p. 203, 204.

Will and Desire does not clash in the least. The thing willed on some consideration, is to utter such words; and certainly, the same consideration so influences him, that he does not desire the contrary: all things considered, he chooses to utter such words, and does not desire not to utter them. And so as to the thing which Mr. Locke speaks of as desired, *viz.* That the words, though they tend to persuade, should not be effectual to that end; his Will is not contrary to this; he does not will that they should be effectual, but rather wills that they should not, as he desires. In order to prove that the Will and Desire may run counter, it should be shown that they may be contrary one to the other in the same thing, or with respect to the very same object of Will or Desire: but here the objects are two; and in each, taken by themselves, the Will and Desire agree. And it is no wonder that they should not agree in different things, however little distinguished they are in their nature. The Will may not agree with the Will, nor Desire agree with Desire, in different things. As in this very instance which Mr. Locke mentions, a person may, on some consideration, desire to use persuasions, and at the same time may desire they may not prevail; but yet nobody will say, that *Desire* runs counter to *Desire;* or that this proves that *Desire* is perfectly a distinct thing from *Desire.*—The like might be observed of the other instance Mr. Locke produces, of a man's desiring to be eased of pain, &c.

But not to dwell any longer on this, whether *Desire* and *Will,* and whether *Preference* and *Volition* be precisely the same things or no; yet, I trust it will be allowed by all, that in every act of Will there is an act of choice; that in every volition there is a preference, or a prevailing inclination of the soul, whereby the soul, at that instant, is out of a state of

perfect indifference, with respect to the direct object of the volition. So that in every act, or going forth of the Will, there is some preponderation of the mind or inclination, one way rather than another; and the soul had rather *have* or *do* one thing than another, or than not to have or do that thing; and that there, where there is absolutely no preferring or choosing, but a perfect continuing equilibrium, there is no volition.

Section II.

Concerning the Determination *of the Will.*

By *determining the Will*, if the phrase be used with any meaning, must be intended, *causing that the act of the Will or Choice should be thus, and not otherwise:* and the Will is said to be determined, when, in consequence of some action, or influence, its choice is directed to, and fixed upon a particular object. As when we speak of the Determination of motion, we mean causing the motion of the body to be such a way, or in such a direction, rather than another.

To talk of the Determination of the Will, supposes an effect, which must have a cause. If the Will be determined, there is a Determiner. This must be supposed to be intended even by them that say, the Will determines itself. If it be so, the Will is both Determiner and determined; it is a cause that acts and produces effects upon itself, and is the object of its own influence and action.

With respect to that grand enquiry, *What determines the Will*, it would be very tedious and unnecessary at present to enumerate and examine all the various opinions, which have been advanced con-

cerning this matter; nor is it needful that I should enter into a particular disquisition of all points debated in disputes on that question, *Whether the Will always follows the last dictate of the understanding.* It is sufficient to my present purpose to say—*It is that motive, which, as it stands in the view of the mind, is the strongest that determines the Will.* But it may be necessary that I should a little explain my meaning in this.

By *motive*, I mean the whole of that which moves, excites or invites the mind to volition, whether that be one thing singly, or many things conjunctly. Many particular things may concur and unite their strength to induce the mind; and when it is so, all together are as it were one complex motive. And when I speak of the *strongest motive*, I have respect to the strength of the whole that operates to induce to a particular act of volition, whether that be the strength of one thing alone, or of many together.

Whatever is a motive, in this sense, must be something that is *extant in the view or apprehension of the understanding*, or perceiving faculty. Nothing can induce or invite the mind to will or act any thing, any further than it is perceived, or is some way or other in the mind's view; for what is wholly unperceived, and perfectly out of the mind's view, cannot affect the mind at all. It is most evident, that nothing is in the mind, or reaches it, or takes any hold of it, any otherwise than as it is perceived or thought of.

And I think it must also be allowed by all, that every thing that is properly called a motive, excitement or inducement to a perceiving willing agent, has some sort and degree of *tendency*, or *advantage* to move or excite the Will, previous to the effect, or to the act of the Will excited. This previous tendency of the motive is what I call *the strength of the*

motive. That motive which has a leſs degree of previous advantage or tendency to move the Will, or that appears leſs inviting, as it ſtands in the view of the mind, is what I call a *weaker motive.* On the contrary, that which appears moſt inviting, and has, by what appears concerning it to the underſtanding or apprehenſion, the greateſt degree of previous tendency to excite and induce the choice, is what I call the *ſtrongeſt motive.* And in this ſenſe, I ſuppoſe the Will is always determined by the ſtrongeſt motive.

Things that exiſt in the view of the mind have their ſtrength, tendency or advantage to move or excite its Will, from many things appertaining to the nature and circumſtances of the *thing viewed,* the nature and circumſtances of the *mind that views,* and the degree and manner of its *view ;* which it would perhaps be hard to make a perfect enumeration of. But ſo much I think may be determined in general, without room for controverſy, that whatever is perceived or apprehended by an intelligent and voluntary agent, which has the nature and influence of a motive to volition or choice, is conſidered or viewed *as good ;* nor has it any tendency to invite or engage the election of the ſoul in any further degree than it appears ſuch. For to ſay otherwiſe, would be to ſay, that things that appear have a tendency by the appearance they make, to engage the mind to elect them, ſome other way than by their appearing eligible to it ; which is abſurd. And therefore it muſt be true, in ſome ſenſe, that *the Will always is as the greateſt apparent good is.* But only, for the right underſtanding of this, two things muſt be well and diſtinctly obſerved.

1. It muſt be obſerved in what ſenſe I uſe the term *good ;* namely as of the ſame import with *agreeable.* To appear *good* to the mind, as I uſe the

phraſe, is the ſame as to *appear agreeable*, or *ſeem pleaſing* to the mind. Certainly nothing appears inviting and eligible to the mind, or tending to engage its inclination and choice, conſidered as *evil* or *diſagreeable ;* nor, indeed, as *indifferent*, and neither agreeable nor diſagreeable. But if it tends to draw the inclination, and move the Will, it muſt be under the notion of that which *ſuits* the mind. And therefore that muſt have the greateſt tendency to attract and engage it, which, as it ſtands in the mind's view, ſuits it beſt, and pleaſes it moſt ; and in that ſenſe, is the greateſt apparent good : to ſay otherwiſe, is little, if any thing, ſhort of a direct and plain contradiction.

The word *good*, in this ſenſe, includes in its ſignification, the removal or avoiding of evil, or of that which is diſagreeable and uneaſy. It is agreeable and pleaſing to avoid what is diſagreeable and diſpleaſing and to have uneaſineſs removed. So that here is included what Mr. Locke ſuppoſes determines the Will. For when he ſpeaks of uneaſineſs as determining the Will, he muſt be underſtood as ſuppoſing that the end or aim which governs in the volition or act of preference, is the avoiding or removal of that uneaſineſs ; and that is the ſame thing as chooſing and ſeeking what is more eaſy and agreeable.

2. When I ſay, the Will is as the greateſt apparent good is, or (as I have explained it) that volition has always for its object the thing which appears moſt agreeable ; it muſt be carefully obſerved, to avoid confuſion and needleſs objection, that I ſpeak of the *direct* and *immediate* object of the act of volition ; and not ſome object that the act of Will has not an immediate, but only an indirect and remote reſpect to. Many acts of volition have ſome remote relation to an object, that is different from the thing

moſt immediately willed and choſen. Thus, when a drunkard has his liquor before him, and he has to chooſe whether to drink it or no ; the proper and immediate objects, about which his preſent volition is converſant, and between which his choice now decides, are his own acts, in drinking the liquor, or letting it alone ; and this will certainly be done according to what, in the preſent view of his mind, taken in the whole of it, is moſt agreeable to him. If he chooſes or wills to drink it, and not to let it alone ; then this action, as it ſtands in the view of his mind, with all that belongs to its appearance there, is more agreeable and pleaſing than letting it alone.

But the objects to which this act of volition may relate more remotely, and between which his choice may determine more indirectly, are the preſent pleaſure the man expects by drinking, and the future miſery which he judges will be the conſequence of it : he may judge that this future miſery, when it comes, will be more diſagreeable and unpleaſant, than refraining from drinking now would be. But theſe two things are not the proper objects that the act of volition ſpoken of is nextly converſant about. For the act of Will ſpoken of is concerning preſent drinking or forbearing to drink. If he wills to drink, then drinking is the proper object of the act of his Will ; and drinking, on ſome account or other, now appears moſt agreeable to him, and ſuits him beſt. If he chooſes to refrain, then refraining is the immediate object of his Will, and is moſt pleaſing to him. If in the choice he makes in the caſe, he prefers a preſent pleaſure to a future advantage, which he judges will be greater when it comes ; then a leſſer preſent pleaſure appears more agreeable to him than a greater advantage at a diſtance. If on the contrary a future advantage is preferred, then that appears moſt agreeable, and ſuits him beſt. And ſo ſtill

the preſent volition is as the greateſt apparent good at preſent is.

I have rather choſen to expreſs myſelf thus, *that the Will always is as the greateſt apparent good*, or *as what appears moſt agreeable, is*, than to ſay that the Will *is determined by* the greateſt apparent good, or by what ſeems moſt agreeable ; becauſe an appearing moſt agreeable or pleaſing to the mind, and the mind's preferring and chooſing, ſeem hardly to be properly and perfectly diſtinct. If ſtrict propriety of ſpeech be inſiſted on, it may more properly be ſaid, that the *voluntary action* which is the immediate conſequence and fruit of the mind's volition or choice, is *determined* by that which appears moſt agreeable, than the preference or choice itſelf ; but that the act of volition itſelf is always determined by that in or about the mind's view of the object, which *cauſes it to appear* moſt agreeable. I ſay, *in or about the mind's view* of the object, becauſe what has influence to render an object in view agreeable, is not only what appears *in* the object viewed, but alſo *the manner* of the view, and *the ſtate and circumſtances* of the mind that views.—Particularly to enumerate all things pertaining to the mind's view of the objects of volition, which have influence in their appearing agreeable to the mind, would be a matter of no ſmall difficulty, and might require a treatiſe by itſelf, and is not neceſſary to my preſent purpoſe. I ſhall therefore only mention ſome things in general.

I. One thing that makes an object propoſed to choice agreeable, is the *apparent nature* and *circumſtances of the object.* And there are various things of this ſort, that have an hand in rendering the object more or leſs agreeable ; as,

1. That which appears in the object, which renders it *beautiful* and pleaſant, or *deformed* and irkſome to the mind ; viewing it as it is *in itſelf.*

2. The apparent degree of pleaſure or trouble *attending* the object, or the *conſequence* of it. Such concomitants and conſequents being viewed as circumſtances of objects, are to be conſidered as belonging to it, and as it were parts of it; as it ſtands in the mind's view, as a propoſed object of choice.

3. The *apparent ſtate* of the pleaſure or trouble that appears, with reſpect to *diſtance of time;* being either nearer or farther off. It is a thing in itſelf agreeable to the mind, to have pleaſure ſpeedily; and diſagreeable to have it delayed; ſo that if there be two equal degrees of pleaſure ſet in the mind's view, and all other things are equal, but only one is beheld as near, and the other far off; the nearer will appear moſt agreeable, and ſo will be choſen. Becauſe tho' the agreeableneſs of the objects be exactly equal, as viewed in themſelves, yet not as viewed in their circumſtances; one of them having the additional agreeableneſs of the circumſtance of nearneſs.

II. Another thing that contributes to the agreeableneſs of an object of choice, as it ſtands in the mind's view, is the *manner of the view.* If the object be ſomething which appears connected with future pleaſure, not only will the degree of apparent pleaſure have influence, but alſo the manner of the view, eſpecially in two reſpects.

1. With reſpect to the degree of *judgment,* or firmneſs of *aſſent,* with which the mind judges the pleaſure to be future. Becauſe it is more agreeable to have a *certain* happineſs, than an *uncertain* one; and a pleaſure viewed as more probable, all other things being equal, is more agreeable to the mind, than that which is viewed as leſs probable.

2. With reſpect to the degree of the *idea* of the future pleaſure. With regard to things which are the ſubject of our thoughts, either paſt, preſent or

future, we have much more of an idea or apprehenſion of ſome things than others; that is, our idea is much more clear, lively and ſtrong. Thus the ideas we have of ſenſible things by immediate ſenſation, are uſually much more lively than thoſe we have by mere imagination, or by contemplation of them when abſent. My idea of the ſun, when I look upon it, is more vivid than when I only think of it.—Our idea of the ſweet reliſh of a delicious fruit is uſually ſtronger when we taſte it, than when we only imagine it. And ſometimes the idea we have of things by contemplation, are much ſtronger and clearer, than at other times. Thus, a man at one time has a much ſtronger idea of the pleaſure which is to be enjoyed in eating ſome ſort of food that he loves, than at another. Now the degree, or ſtrength of the idea or ſenſe that men have of future good or evil, is one thing that has great influence on their minds to excite choice or volition. When of two kinds of future pleaſure, which the mind conſiders of, and are preſented for choice, both are ſuppoſed exactly equal by the judgment, and both equally certain, and all other things are equal, but only one of them is what the mind has a far more lively ſenſe of, than of the other; this has the greateſt advantage by far to affect and attract the mind, and move the Will. It is now more agreeable to the mind, to take the pleaſure it has a ſtrong and lively ſenſe of, than that which it has only a faint idea of. The view of the former is attended with the ſtrongeſt appetite, and the greateſt uneaſineſs attends the want of it; and it is agreeable to the mind to have uneaſineſs removed, and its appetite gratified. And if ſeveral future enjoyments are preſented together, as competitors for the choice of the mind, ſome of them judged to be greater, and others leſs; the mind alſo having a greater ſenſe and more lively idea of the good of

ſome of them, and of others a leſs; and ſome are viewed as of greater certainty or probability than others; and thoſe enjoyments that appear moſt agreeable in one of theſe reſpects, appear leaſt ſo in others: in this caſe, all other things being equal, the agreeableneſs of a propoſed object of choice will be in a degree ſome way compounded of the degree of good ſuppoſed by the judgment, the degree of apparent probability or certainty of that good, and the degree of the view or ſenſe, or livelineſs of the idea the mind has of that good; becauſe all together concur to conſtitute the degree in which the object appears at preſent agreeable; and accordingly volition will be determined.

I might further obſerve, the ſtate of the mind that views a propoſed object of choice, is another thing that contributes to the agreeableneſs or diſagreeableneſs of that object; the particular temper which the mind has by nature, or that has been introduced and eſtabliſhed by education, example, cuſtom, or ſome other means; or the frame or ſtate that the mind is in on a particular occaſion. That object which appears agreeable to one, does not ſo to another. And the ſame object does not always appear alike agreeable, to the ſame perſon, at different times. It is moſt agreeable to ſome men, to follow their reaſon; and to others, to follow their appetites: to ſome men it is more agreeable to deny a vicious inclination, than to gratify it: others it ſuits beſt to gratify the vileſt appetites. It is more diſagreeable to ſome men than others, to counter-act a former reſolution. In theſe reſpects, and many others which might be mentioned, different things will be moſt agreeable to different perſons; and not only ſo, but to the ſame perſons at different times.

But poſſibly it is needleſs and improper, to mention the frame and ſtate of the mind, as a diſtinct

ground of the agreeableneſs of objects from the other two mentioned before, *viz.* The apparent nature and circumſtances of the objects viewed, and the manner of the view: perhaps if we ſtrictly conſider the matter, the different temper and ſtate of the mind makes no alteration as to the agreeableneſs of objects, any other way than as it makes the objects themſelves appear differently beautiful or deformed, having apparent pleaſure or pain attending them: and as it occaſions the manner of the view to be different, cauſes the idea of beauty or deformity, pleaſure or uneaſineſs to be more or leſs lively.

However, I think ſo much is certain, that volition, in no one inſtance that can be mentioned, is otherwiſe than the greateſt apparent good is, in the manner which has been explained. The choice of the mind never departs from that which, at that time, and with reſpect to the direct and immediate objects of that deciſion of the mind, appears moſt agreeable and pleaſing, all things conſidered. If the immediate objects of the Will are a man's own actions, then thoſe actions which appear moſt agreeable to him he wills. If it be now moſt agreeable to him, all things conſidered, to walk, then he now wills to walk. If it be now, upon the whole of what at preſent appears to him, moſt agreeable to ſpeak, then he chooſes to ſpeak: if it ſuits him beſt to keep ſilence, then he chooſes to keep ſilence. There is ſcarcely a plainer and more univerſal dictate of the ſenſe and experience of mankind, than that, when men act voluntarily, and do what they pleaſe, then they do what ſuits them beſt, or what is moſt *agreeable to them.* To ſay, that they do what they pleaſe, or what pleaſes them, but yet do not do what is *agreeable* to them, is the ſame thing as to ſay, they do what they pleaſe, but do not act their pleaſure; and that is to ſay, that they do what they pleaſe, and yet do not do what they pleaſe.

It appears from these things, that in some sense, *the Will always follows the last dictate of the understanding.* But then the *understanding* must be taken in a large sense, as including the whole faculty of perception or apprehension, and not merely what is called *reason* or *judgment.* If by the dictate of the understanding is meant what reason declares to be best or most for the person's happiness, taking in the whole of its duration, it is not true, that the Will always follows the last dictate of the understanding. Such a dictate of reason is quite a different matter from things appearing now most *agreeable;* all things being put together which pertain to the mind's present perceptions, apprehensions or ideas, in any respect. Altho' that dictate of reason, when it takes place, is one thing that is put into the scales, and is to be considered as a thing that has concern in the compound influence which moves and induces the Will; and is one thing that is to be considered in estimating the degree of that appearance of good which the will always follows; either as having its influence added to other things, or subducted from them. When it concurs with other things, then its weight is added to them, as put into the same scale; but when it is against them, it is as a weight in the opposite scale, where it resists the influence of other things: yet its resistance is often overcome by their greater weight, and so the act of the Will is determined in opposition to it.

The things which I have said, may, I hope, serve, in some measure, to illustrate and confirm the position I laid down in the beginning of this section, *viz.* That *the Will is always determined by the strongest motive,* or by that view of the mind which has the greatest degree of *previous* tendency to excite volition. But whether I have been so happy as rightly to explain the thing wherein consists the strength of

motives, or not, yet my failing in this will not overthrow the poſition itſelf; which carries much of its own evidence with it, and is the thing of chief importance to the purpoſe of the enſuing diſcourſe: And the truth of it, I hope, will appear with great clearneſs, before I have finiſhed what I have to ſay on the ſubject of human liberty.

Section III.

Concerning the Meaning of the Terms Neceſſity, Impoſſibility, Inability, &c. *and of* Contingence.

The words *neceſſary*, *impoſſible*, &c. are abundantly uſed in controverſies about Free-Will and moral agency; and therefore the ſenſe in which they are uſed, ſhould be clearly underſtood.

Here I might ſay, that a thing is then ſaid to be *neceſſary*, when it muſt be, and cannot be otherwiſe. But this would not properly be a definition of Neceſſity, or an explanation of the word, any more than if I explained the word *muſt*, by there being a Neceſſity. The words *muſt*, *can*, and *cannot*, need explication as much as the words *neceſſary* and *impoſſible*; excepting that the former are words that children commonly uſe, and know ſomething of the meaning of earlier than the latter.

The word *neceſſary*, as uſed in common ſpeech, is a relative term; and relates to ſome ſuppoſed oppoſition made to the exiſtence of the thing ſpoken of, which is overcome, or proves in vain to hinder or alter it. That is neceſſary, in the original and proper ſenſe of the word, which is, or will be, notwithſtanding all ſuppoſable oppoſition. To ſay, that a

thing is neceſſary, is the ſame thing as to ſay, that it is impoſſible, it ſhould not be: But the word *impoſſible* is manifeſtly a relative term, and has reference to ſuppoſed power exerted to bring a thing to paſs, which is inſufficient for the effect; as the word *unable* is relative, and has relation to ability or endeavour which is inſufficient; and as the word *irreſiſtible* is relative, and has always reference to reſiſtance which is made, or may be made to ſome force or power tending to an effect, and is inſufficient to withſtand the power, or hinder the effect. The common notion of Neceſſity and Impoſſibility implies ſomething that fruſtrates endeavour or deſire.

Here ſeveral things are to be noted.

1. Things are ſaid to be neceſſary in *general*, which are or will be notwithſtanding any ſuppoſable oppoſition *from us or others*, or from whatever quarter. But things are ſaid to be neceſſary *to us*, which are or will be notwithſtanding all oppoſition ſuppoſable in the caſe *from us*. The ſame may be obſerved of the word *impoſſible*, and other ſuch like terms.

2. Theſe terms *neceſſary*, *impoſſible*, *irreſiſtible*, &c. do eſpecially belong to controverſy about liberty and moral agency, as uſed in the latter of the two ſenſes now mentioned, *viz.* as neceſſary or impoſſible *to us*, and with relation to any ſuppoſable oppoſition or endeavour *of ours*.

3. As the word *Neceſſity*, in its vulgar and common uſe, is relative, and has always reference to ſome ſuppoſable inſufficient oppoſition; ſo when we ſpeak of any thing as neceſſary *to us*, it is with relation to ſome ſuppoſable oppoſition of *our Wills*, or ſome voluntary exertion or effort of ours to the contrary: For we do not properly make oppoſition to an event, any otherwiſe than as we *voluntarily* oppoſe it. Things are ſaid to be what muſt be, or

neceſſarily are, *as to us*, when they are, or will be, though we deſire or endeavour the contrary, or try to prevent or remove their exiſtence: but ſuch oppoſition of ours always either conſiſts in, or implies oppoſition of our Wills.

It is manifeſt that all ſuch like words and phraſes, as vulgarly uſed, are uſed and accepted in this manner. A thing is ſaid to be *neceſſary*, when we cannot help it, let us do what we will. So any thing is ſaid to be *impoſſible* to us, when we would do it, or would have it brought to paſs, and endeavour it; or at leaſt may be ſuppoſed to deſire and ſeek it; but all our deſires and endeavours are, or would be vain. And that is ſaid to be *irreſiſtible*, which overcomes all our oppoſition, reſiſtance, and endeavour to the contrary. And we are to be ſaid *unable* to do a thing, when our ſuppoſable deſires and endeavours to do it are inſufficient.

We are accuſtomed, in the common uſe of language, to apply and underſtand theſe phraſes in this ſenſe: we grow up with ſuch a habit; which by the daily uſe of theſe terms, in ſuch a ſenſe, from our childhood, becomes fixed and ſettled; ſo that the idea of a relation to a ſuppoſed will, deſire and endeavour of ours, is ſtrongly connected with theſe terms, and naturally excited in our minds, whenever we hear the words uſed. Such ideas, and theſe words, are ſo united and aſſociated, that they unavoidably go together; one ſuggeſts the other, and carries the other with it, and never can be ſeparated as long as we live. And if we uſe the words, as terms of art, in another ſenſe, yet, unleſs we are exceeding circumſpect and wary, we ſhall inſenſibly ſlide into the vulgar uſe of them, and ſo apply the words in a very inconſiſtent manner: this habitual connexion of ideas will deceive and confound us in our reaſonings and diſcourſes, wherein we pre-

tend to uſe theſe terms in that manner, as terms of art.

4. It follows from what has been obſerved, that when theſe terms *neceſſary*, *impoſſible*, *irreſiſtible*, *unable*, &c. are uſed in caſes wherein no oppoſition, or inſufficient will or endeavour, is ſuppoſed, or can be ſuppoſed, but the very nature of the ſuppoſed caſe itſelf excludes and denies any ſuch oppoſition, will or endeavour, theſe terms are then not uſed in their proper ſignification, but quite beſide their uſe in common ſpeech. The reaſon is manifeſt; namely, that in ſuch caſes we cannot uſe the words with reference to a ſuppoſable oppoſition, will or endeavour. And therefore if any man uſes theſe terms in ſuch caſes, he either uſes them nonſenſically, or in ſome new ſenſe, diverſe from their original and proper meaning. As for inſtance; if a man ſhould affirm after this manner, That it is neceſſary for a man, and what muſt be, that a man ſhould chooſe virtue rather than vice, during the time that he prefers virtue to vice; and that it is a thing impoſſible and irreſiſtible, that it ſhould be otherwiſe than that he ſhould have this choice, ſo long as this choice continues; ſuch a man would uſe the terms *muſt*, *irreſiſtible*, &c. with perfect inſignificance and nonſenſe; or in ſome new ſenſe, diverſe from their common uſe; which is with reference, as has been obſerved, to ſuppoſable oppoſition, unwillingneſs and reſiſtance; whereas, here, the very ſuppoſition excludes and denies any ſuch thing: for the caſe ſuppoſed is that of being willing and chooſing.

5. It appears from what has been ſaid, that theſe terms *neceſſary*, *impoſſible*, &c. are often uſed by philoſophers and metaphyſicians in a ſenſe quite diverſe from their common uſe and original ſignification: For they apply them to many caſes in which no oppoſition is ſuppoſed or ſuppoſable. Thus they uſe

them with reſpect to God's exiſtence before the creation of the world, when there was no other being but He: ſo with regard to many of the diſpoſitions and acts of the Divine Being. Such as his loving himſelf, his loving righteouſneſs, hating ſin, &c. So they apply theſe terms to many caſes of the inclinations and actions of created intelligent beings, angels and men; wherein all oppoſition of the Will is ſhut out and denied, in the very ſuppoſition of the caſe.

Metaphyſical or *Philoſophical* Neceſſity is nothing different from their certainty. I ſpeak not now of the certainty of knowledge, but the certainty that is in things themſelves, which is the foundation of the certainty of the knowledge of them; or that wherein lies the ground of the infallibility of the propoſition which affirms them.

What is ſometimes given as the definition of philoſophical Neceſſity, namely, *That by which a thing cannot but be*, or *whereby it cannot be otherwiſe*, fails of being a proper explanation of it, on two accounts: *Firſt*, the words *can*, or *cannot*, need explanation as much as the word *Neceſſity*; and the former may as well be explained by the latter, as the latter by the former. Thus, if any one aſked us what we mean, when we ſay, a thing *cannot but be*, we might explain ourſelves by ſaying, we mean, it muſt neceſſarily be ſo; as well as explain Neceſſity, by ſaying, it is that by which a thing cannot but be. And *Secondly*, this definition is liable to the forementioned great inconvience: the words *cannot*, or *unable*, are properly relative, and have relation to power exerted, or that may be exerted, in order to the thing ſpoken of; to which, as I have now obſerved, the word *Neceſſity*, as uſed by philoſophers, has no reference.

Philoſophical Neceſſity is really nothing elſe than

the full and fixed connexion between the things ſignified by the ſubject and predicate of a propoſition, which affirms ſomething to be true. When there is ſuch a connexion, then the thing affirmed in the propoſition is neceſſary, in a philoſophical ſenſe; whether any oppoſition, or contrary effort be ſuppoſed, or ſuppoſable in the caſe, or no. When the ſubject and predicate of the propoſition, which affirms the exiſtence of any thing, either ſubſtance, quality, act or circumſtance, have a full and certain connexion, then the exiſtence or being of that thing is ſaid to be neceſſary in a metaphyſical ſenſe. And in this ſenſe I uſe the word *Neceſſity*, in the following diſcourſe, when I endeavour to prove *that Neceſſity is not inconſiſtent with liberty.*

The ſubject and predicate of a propoſition, which affirms exiſtence of ſomething, may have a full, fixed, and certain connexion ſeveral ways.

(1.) They may have a full and perfect connexion *in and of themſelves;* becauſe it may imply a contradiction, or groſs abſurdity, to ſuppoſe them not connected. Thus many things are neceſſary in their own nature. So the external exiſtence of being generally conſidered, is neceſſary *in itſelf:* becauſe it would be in itſelf the greateſt abſurdity, to deny the exiſtence of being in general, or to ſay there was abſolute and univerſal nothing; and is as it were the ſum of all contradictions; as might be ſhewn, if this were a proper place for it. So God's infinity, and other attributes are neceſſary. So it is neceſſary *in its own nature*, that two and two ſhould be four; and it is neceſſary, that all right lines drawn from the centre of a circle to the circumference ſhould be equal. It is neceſſary, fit and ſuitable, that men ſhould do to others, as they would that they ſhould do to them. So innumerable metaphyſical and mathematical truths are neceſſary *in*

themſelves: the ſubject and predicate of the propoſition which affirms them, are perfectly connected *of themſelves.*

(2.) The connexion of the ſubject and predicate of a propoſition, which affirms the exiſtence of ſomething, may be fixed and made certain, becauſe the exiſtence of that thing is already come to paſs; and either now is, or has been; and ſo has as it were made ſure of exiſtence. And therefore, the propoſition which affirms preſent and paſt exiſtence of it, may by this means be made certain, and neceſſarily and unalterably true; the paſt event has fixed and decided the matter, as to its exiſtence; and has made it impoſſible but that exiſtence ſhould be truly predicated of it. Thus the exiſtence of whatever is already come to paſs, is now become neceſſary; it is become impoſſible it ſhould be otherwiſe than true, that ſuch a thing has been.

(3.) The ſubject and predicate of a propoſition which affirms ſomething to be, may have a real and certain connexion *conſequently;* and ſo the exiſtence of the thing may be conſequently neceſſary; as it may be ſurely and firmly connected with ſomething elſe, that is neceſſary in one of the former reſpects. As it is either fully and thoroughly connected with that which is abſolutely neceſſary in its own nature, or with ſomething which has already received and made ſure of exiſtence. This Neceſſity lies *in*, or may be explained *by* the connexion of two or more propoſitions one with another. Things which are perfectly connected with other things that are neceſſary, are neceſſary themſelves, by a Neceſſity of conſequence.

And here it may be obſerved, that all things which are future, or which will hereafter begin to be, which can be ſaid to be neceſſary, are neceſſary only in this laſt way. Their exiſtence is not neceſſary in itſelf;

for if ſo, they always would have exiſted. Nor is their exiſtence become neceſſary by being made ſure, by being already come to paſs. Therefore, the only way that any thing that is to come to paſs hereafter, is or can be neceſſary, is by a connexion with ſomething that is neceſſary in its own nature, or ſomething that already is, or has been; ſo that the one being ſuppoſed, the other certainly follows. And this alſo is the only way that all things paſt, excepting thoſe which were from eternity, could be neceſſary *before they came to paſs*, or could come to paſs neceſſarily; and therefore the only way in which any effect or event, or any thing whatſoever that ever has had, or will have a beginning, has come into being neceſſarily, or will hereafter neceſſarily exiſt. And therefore *this* is the Neceſſity which eſpecially belongs to controverſies about the acts of the Will.

It may be of ſome uſe in theſe controverſies, further to obſerve concerning *metaphyſical* Neceſſity, that (agreeable to the diſtinction before obſerved of Neceſſity, as *vulgarly* underſtood) things that exiſt may be ſaid to be neceſſary, either with a *general* or *particular* Neceſſity. The exiſtence of a thing may be ſaid to be neceſſary with a *general* Neceſſity, when all things whatſoever being conſidered, there is a foundation for certainty of their exiſtence; or when in the moſt general and univerſal view of things, the ſubject and predicate of the propoſition, which affirms its exiſtence, would appear with an infallible connexion.

An event, or the exiſtence of a thing, may be ſaid to be neceſſary with a *particular* Neceſſity, or with regard to a particular perſon, thing or time, when nothing that can be taken into conſideration, in or about that perſon, thing or time, alters the caſe at all, as to the certainty of that event, or the exiſtence

of that thing; or can be of any account at all, in determining the infallibility of the connexion of the ſubject and predicate in the propoſition which affirms the exiſtence of the thing; ſo that it is all one, as to that perſon, or thing, at leaſt at that time, as if the exiſtence were neceſſary with a Neceſſity that is moſt *univerſal* and *abſolute*. Thus there are many things that happen to particular perſons, which they have no hand in, and in the exiſtence of which no will of theirs has any concern, at leaſt at that time; which, whether they are neceſſary or not, with regard to things in general, yet are neceſſary to them, and with regard to any volition of theirs at that time; as they prevent all acts of the will about the affair.—I ſhall have occaſion to apply this obſervation to particular inſtances in the following diſcourſe.—Whether the ſame things that are neceſſary with a *particular* Neceſſity, be not alſo neceſſary with a general Neceſſity, may be a matter of future conſideration. Let that be as it will, it alters not the caſe, as to the uſe of this diſtinction of the kinds of Neceſſity.

Theſe things may be ſufficient for the explaining of the terms *neceſſary* and *Neceſſity*, as terms of art, and as often uſed by metaphyſicians, and controverſial writers in divinity, in a ſenſe diverſe from, and more extenſive than their original meaning, in common language, which was before explained.

What has been ſaid to ſhew the meaning of the terms *neceſſary* and *Neceſſity*, may be ſufficient for the explaining of the oppoſite terms *impoſſible* and *impoſſibility*. For there is no difference, but only the latter are negative, and the former poſitive. *Impoſſibility* is the ſame as *negative Neceſſity*, or a Neceſſity that a thing ſhould not be. And it is uſed as a term of art in a like diverſity from the original and vulgar meaning, with Neceſſity.

The ſame may be obſerved concerning the words *unable* and *Inability*. It has been obſerved, that theſe terms, in their original and common uſe, have relation to will and endeavour, as ſuppoſable in the caſe, and as inſufficient for the bringing to paſs the thing willed and endeavoured. But as theſe terms are often uſed by philoſophers and divines, eſpecially writers on controverſies about Free-Will, they are uſed in a quite different, and far more extenſive ſenſe, and are applied to many caſes wherein no will or endeavour for the bringing of the thing to paſs, is or can be ſuppoſed, but is actually denied and excluded in the nature of the caſe.

As the words *neceſſary*, *impoſſible*, *unable*, &c. are uſed by polemic writers, in a ſenſe diverſe from their common ſignification, the like has happened to the term *contingent*. Any thing is ſaid to be contingent, or to come to paſs by chance or accident, in the original meaning of ſuch words, when its connexion with its cauſes or antecedents, according to the eſtabliſhed courſe of things, is not diſcerned; and ſo is what we have no means of the foreſight of. And eſpecially is any thing ſaid to be contingent or accidental with regard to us, when any thing comes to paſs that we are concerned in, as occaſions or ſubjects, without our foreknowledge, and beſide our deſign and ſcope.

But the word *contingent* is abundantly uſed in a very different ſenſe; not for that whoſe connexion with the ſeries of things we cannot diſcern, ſo as to foreſee the event, but for ſomething which has abſolutely no previous ground or reaſon, with which its exiſtence has any fixed and certain connexion.

Section IV.

Of the Diſtinction of Natural *and* Moral Neceſſity, *and* Inability.

That Neceſſity which has been explained, conſiſting in an infallible connexion of the things ſignified by the ſubject and predicate of a propoſition, as intelligent beings are the ſubjects of it, is diſtinguiſhed into *moral* and *natural* Neceſſity.

I ſhall not now ſtand to enquire whether this diſtinction be a proper and perfect diſtinction; but ſhall only explain how theſe two ſorts of Neceſſity are underſtood, as the terms are ſometimes uſed, and as they are uſed in the following diſcourſe.

The phraſe, *moral Neceſſity*, is uſed variouſly: ſometimes it is uſed for a Neceſſity of moral obligation. So we ſay, a man is under Neceſſity, when he is under bonds of duty and conſcience, which he cannot be diſcharged from. So the word *Neceſſity* is often uſed for great obligation in point of intereſt. Sometimes by moral Neceſſity is meant that apparent connexion of things, which is the ground of *moral evidence;* and ſo is diſtinguiſhed from *abſolute Neceſſity*, or that ſure connexion of things, that is a foundation for *infallible certainty*. In this ſenſe, moral Neceſſity ſignifies much the ſame as that high degree of probability, which is ordinarily ſufficient to ſatisfy, and be relied upon by mankind, in their conduct and behaviour in the world, as they would conſult their own ſafety and intereſt, and treat others properly as members of ſociety. And ſometimes by moral Neceſſity is meant that Neceſſity of connexion and conſequence, which ariſes from ſuch *moral cauſes*, as the ſtrength of inclination, or mo-

tives, and the connexion which there is in many caſes between theſe, and ſuch certain volitions and actions. And it is in this ſenſe, that I uſe the phraſe, *moral Neceſſity*, in the following diſcourſe.

By *natural Neceſſity*, as applied to men, I mean ſuch neceſſity as men are under through the force of natural cauſes; as diſtinguiſhed from what are called moral cauſes, ſuch as habits and diſpoſitions of the heart, and moral motives and inducements. Thus men placed in certain circumſtances, are the ſubjects of particular ſenſations by Neceſſity: they feel pain when their bodies are wounded; they ſee the objects preſented before them in a clear light, when their eyes are opened: ſo they aſſent to the truth of certain propoſitions, as ſoon as the terms are underſtood; as that two and two make four, that black is not white, that two parallel lines can never croſs one another; ſo by a natural Neceſſity mens' bodies move downwards, when there is nothing to ſupport them.

But here ſeveral things may be noted concerning theſe two kinds of Neceſſity.

1. Moral Neceſſity may be as abſolute, as natural Neceſſity. That is, the effect may be as perfectly connected with its moral cauſe, as a natural neceſſary effect is with its natural cauſe. Whether the Will in every caſe is neceſſarily determined by the ſtrongeſt motive, or whether the Will ever makes any reſiſtance to ſuch a motive, or can ever oppoſe the ſtrongeſt preſent inclination, or not; if that matter ſhould be controverted, yet I ſuppoſe none will deny, but that, in ſome caſes, a previous bias and inclination, or the motive preſented, may be ſo powerful, that the act of the Will may be certainly and indiſſolubly connected therewith. When motives or previous bias are very ſtrong, all will allow that there is ſome *difficulty* in going againſt them.

And if they were yet ſtronger, the difficulty would be ſtill greater. And therefore, if more were ſtill added to their ſtrength, to a certain degree, it would make the difficulty ſo great, that it would be wholly *impoſſible* to ſurmount it; for this plain reaſon, becauſe whatever power men may be ſuppoſed to have to ſurmount difficulties, yet that power is not infinite; and ſo goes not beyond certain limits. If a man can ſurmount ten degrees of difficulty of this kind with twenty degrees of ſtrength, becauſe the degrees of ſtrength are beyond the degrees of difficulty; yet if the difficulty be increaſed to thirty, or an hundred, or a thouſand degrees, and his ſtrength not alſo increaſed, his ſtrength will be wholly inſufficient to ſurmount the difficulty. As therefore it muſt be allowed, that there may be ſuch a thing as a *ſure* and *perfect* connexion between moral cauſes and effects; ſo this only is what I call by the name of *moral Neceſſity*.

2. When I uſe this diſtinction of *moral* and *natural Neceſſity*, I would not be underſtood to ſuppoſe, that if any thing comes to paſs by the former kind of Neceſſity, the *nature* of things is not concerned in it, as well as in the latter. I do not mean to determine, that when a *moral* habit or motive is ſo ſtrong, that the act of the Will infallibly follows, this is not owing to the *natnre of things*. But theſe are the names that theſe two kinds of Neceſſity have uſually been called by; and they muſt be diſtinguiſhed by ſome names or other; for there is a diſtinction or difference between them, that is very important in its conſequences. Which difference does not lie ſo much in the nature of the *connexion*, as in the two terms *connected*. The cauſe with which the effect is connected, is of a particular kind, *viz.* that which is of moral nature; either ſome previous habitual diſpoſition, or ſome motive exhibited to the under-

ſtanding. And the effect is alſo of a particular kind; being likewiſe of a moral nature; conſiſting in ſome inclination or volition of the ſoul or voluntary action.

I ſuppoſe, that Neceſſity which is called *natural*, in diſtinction from *moral* neceſſity, is ſo called, becauſe *mere nature*, as the word is vulgarly uſed, is concerned, without any thing of *choice*. The word *nature* is often uſed in oppoſition to *choice:* not becauſe nature has indeed never any hand in our choice; but this probably comes to paſs by means that we firſt get our notion of nature from that diſcernible and obvious courſe of events, which we obſerve in many things that our choice has no concern in; and eſpecially in the material world; which, in very many parts of it, we eaſily perceive to be in a ſettled courſe; the ſtated order and manner of ſucceſſion being very apparent. But where we do not readily diſcern the rule and connexion, (though there be a connexion, according to an eſtabliſhed law, truly taking place) we ſignify the manner of event by ſome other name. Even in many things which are ſeen in the material and inanimate world, which do not diſcernibly and obviouſly come to paſs according to any ſettled courſe, men do not call the manner of the event by the name of *nature*, but by ſuch names as *accident*, *chance*, *contingent*, &c. So men make a diſtinction between nature and choice; as though they were completely and univerſally diſtinct. Whereas, I ſuppoſe none will deny but that choice, *in many caſes*, ariſes from nature, as truly as other events. But the dependence and connexion between acts of volition or choice, and their cauſes, according to eſtabliſhed laws, is not ſo ſenſible and obvious. And we obſerve that choice is as it were a new principle of motion and action, different from that eſtabliſhed law and order of things which is moſt

obvious, that is ſeen eſpecially in corporeal and ſenſible things; and alſo the choice often interpoſes, interrupts and alters the chain of events in theſe external objects, and cauſes them to proceed otherwiſe than they would do, if let alone, and left to go on according to the laws of motion among themſelves. Hence it is ſpoken of as if it were a principle of motion entirely diſtinct from nature, and properly ſet in oppoſition to it. Names being commonly given to things, according to what is moſt obvious, and is ſuggeſted by what appears to the ſenſes without reflection and reſearch.

3. It muſt be obſerved, that in what has been explained, as ſignified by the name of *moral Neceſſity*, the word *Neceſſity* is not uſed according to the original deſign and meaning of the word: for, as was obſerved before, ſuch terms, *neceſſary*, *impoſſible*, *irreſiſtible*, &c. in common ſpeech, and their moſt proper ſenſe, are always relative; having reference to ſome ſuppoſable voluntary oppoſition or endeavour, that is inſufficient. But no ſuch oppoſition, or contrary will and endeavour, is ſuppoſable in the caſe of moral Neceſſity; which is a certainty of the inclination and will itſelf; which does not admit of the ſuppoſition of a will to oppoſe and reſiſt it. For it is abſurd to ſuppoſe the ſame individual will to oppoſe itſelf, in its preſent act; or the preſent choice to be oppoſite to, and reſiſting preſent choice: as abſurd as it is to talk of two contrary motions, in the ſame moving body, at the ſame time. And therefore the very caſe ſuppoſed never admits of any trial, whether an oppoſing or reſiſting will can overcome this Neceſſity.

What has been ſaid of natural and moral Neceſſity, may ſerve to explain what is intended by natural and moral *Inability*. We are ſaid to be *naturally* unable to do a thing, when we cannot do it if we

will, becauſe what is moſt commonly called *nature* does not allow of it, or becauſe of ſome impeding defect or obſtacle that is extrinſic to the will; either in the faculty of underſtanding, conſtitution of body, or external objects. *Moral* Inability conſiſts not in any of theſe things; but either in the want of inclination; or the ſtrength of a contrary inclination; or the want of ſufficient motives in view, to induce and excite the act of the will, or the ſtrength of apparent motives to the contrary. Or both theſe may be reſolved into one; and it may be ſaid in one word, that moral Inability conſiſts in the oppoſition or want of inclination. For when a perſon is unable to will or chooſe ſuch a thing, through a defect of motives, or prevalence of contrary motives, it is the ſame thing as his being unable through the want of an inclination, or the prevalence of a contrary inclination, in ſuch circumſtances, and under the influence of ſuch views.

To give ſome inſtances of this *moral Inability*.—A woman of great honour and chaſtity may have a moral Inability to proſtitute herſelf to her ſlave. A child of great love and duty to his parents, may be unable to be willing to kill his father. A very laſcivious man, in caſe of certain opportunities and temptations, and in the abſence of ſuch and ſuch reſtraints, may be unable to forbear gratifying his luſt. A drunkard, under ſuch and ſuch circumſtances, may be unable to forbear taking of ſtrong drink. A very malicious man may be unable to exert benevolent acts to an enemy, or to deſire his proſperity; yea, ſome may be ſo under the power of a vile diſpoſition, that they may be unable to love thoſe who are moſt worthy of their eſteem and affection. A ſtrong habit of virtue, and great degree of holineſs may cauſe a moral Inability to love wickedneſs in general, may render a man unable to

take complacence in wicked perſons or things; or to chooſe a wicked life, and prefer it to a virtuous life. And on the other hand, a great degree of habitual wickedneſs may lay a man under an Inability to love and chooſe holineſs; and render him utterly unable to love an infinitely holy Being, or to chooſe and cleave to him as his chief good.

Here it may be of uſe to obſerve this diſtinction of moral Inability, *viz.* of that which is *general and habitual*, and that which is *particular and occaſional*. By a *general and habitual* moral Inability, I mean an Inability in the heart to all exerciſes or acts of will of that nature or kind, through a fixed and habitual inclination, or an habitual and ſtated defect, or want of a certain kind of inclination. Thus a very ill-natured man may be unable to exert ſuch acts of benevolence, as another, who is full of good nature, commonly exerts; and a man, whoſe heart is habitually void of gratitude, may be unable to exert ſuch and ſuch grateful acts, through that ſtated defect of a grateful inclination. By *particular and occaſional* moral Inability, I mean an Inability of the will or heart to a particular act, through the ſtrength or defect of preſent motives, or of inducements preſented to the view of the underſtanding, *on this occaſion*. If it be ſo, that the will is always determined by the ſtrongeſt motive, then it muſt always have an Inability, in this latter ſenſe, to act otherwiſe than it does; it not being poſſible, in any caſe, that the will ſhould, at preſent, go againſt the motive which has now, all things conſidered, the greateſt ſtrength and advantage to excite and induce it. The former of theſe kinds of moral Inability, conſiſting in that which is ſtated, habitual and general, is moſt commonly called by the name of Inability; becauſe the word *Inability*, in its moſt proper and original ſignification, has reſpect to ſome *ſtated de-*

fect. And this especially obtains the name of *Inability* also upon another account: I before observed, that the word Inability in its original and most common use, is a relative term; and has respect to will and endeavour, as supposable in the case, and as insufficient to bring to pass the thing desired and endeavoured. Now there may be more of an appearance and shadow of this, with respect to the acts which arise from a fixed and strong habit, than others that arise only from transient occasions and causes. Indeed will and endeavour against, or diverse from *present* acts of the will, are in no case supposable, whether those acts be occasional or habitual; for that would be to suppose the will, at present, to be otherwise than, at present, it is. But yet there may be will and endeavour against *future* acts of the will, or volitions that are likely to take place, as viewed at a distance. It is no contradiction to suppose that the acts of the will at one time, may be against the acts of the will at another time; and there may be desires and endeavours to prevent or excite future acts of the will; but such desires and endeavours are, in many cases, rendered insufficient and vain, through fixedness of habit: when the occasion returns, the strength of habit overcomes, and baffles all such opposition. In this respect, a man may be in miserable slavery and bondage to a strong habit. But it may be comparatively easy to make an alteration with respect to such future acts as are only occasional and transient; because the occasion or transient cause, if foreseen, may often easily be prevented or avoided. On this account, the moral Inability that attends fixed habits, especially obtains the name of *Inability*. And then, as the will may remotely and indirectly resist itself, and do it in vain, in the case of strong habits; so reason may resist present acts of the will, and its resistance be insuffi-

cient; and this is more commonly the case also, when the acts arise from strong habit.

But it must be observed concerning moral Inability, in each kind of it, that the word *Inability* is used in a sense very diverse from its original import. The word signifies only a natural Inability, in the proper use of it; and is applied to such cases only wherein a present will or inclination to the thing, with respect to which a person is said to be unable, is supposable. It cannot be truly said, according to the ordinary use of language, that a malicious man, let him be never so malicious, cannot hold his hand from striking, or that he is not able to shew his neighbour kindness; or that a drunkard, let his appetite be never so strong, cannot keep the cup from his mouth. In the strictest propriety of speech, a man has a thing in his power, if he has it in his choice, or at his election: and a man cannot be truly said to be unable to do a thing, when he can do it if he will. It is improperly said, that a person cannot perform those external actions which are dependent on the act of the will, and which would be easily performed, if the act of the will were present. (And if it be improperly said, that he cannot perform those external voluntary actions, which depend on the will, it is in some respect more improperly said, that he is unable to exert the acts of the will themselves; because it is more evidently false, with respect to these, that he cannot if he will: for to say so, is a down-right contradiction: it is to say, he *cannot* will, if he *does* will.) And in this case, not only is it true, that it is easy for a man to do the thing if he will, but the very willing is the doing; when once he has willed, the thing is performed; and nothing else remains to be done. Therefore, in these things to ascribe a non-performance to the want of power or ability, is not just; because the thing wanting is not a being

able, but a being *willing*. There are faculties of mind, and capacity of nature, and every thing elſe ſufficient, but a diſpoſition: nothing is wanting but a will.

Section V.

Concerning the Notion of Liberty, *and of* Moral Agency.

The plain and obvious meaning of the words *Freedom* and *Liberty*, in common ſpeech, is *power, opportunity or advantage, that any one has, to do as he pleaſes.* Or in other words, his being free from hinderance or impediment in the way of doing, or conducting in any reſpect, as he wills * And the contrary to Liberty, whatever name we call that by, is a perſon's being hindered or unable to conduct as he will, or being neceſſitated to do otherwiſe.

If this which I have mentioned be the meaning of the word Liberty, in the ordinary uſe of language; as I truſt that none that has ever learned to talk, and is unprejudiced, will deny; then it will follow, that in propriety of ſpeech, neither Liberty, nor its contrary, can properly be aſcribed to any being or thing, but that which has ſuch a faculty, power or property, as is called will. For that which is poſſeſſed of no ſuch thing as *will*, cannot have any *power* or *opportunity* of doing *according to its will*, nor be neceſſitated to act *contrary to its will*, nor be reſtrained from acting agreeably to it. And therefore to talk of

* I ſay not only *doing*, but *conducting*; becauſe a voluntary forbearing to do, ſitting ſtill, keeping ſilence, &c. are inſtances of perſons *conduct*, about which Liberty is exerciſed; though they are not ſo properly called *doing*.

Liberty, or the contrary, as belonging to the *very will itself*, is not to speak good sense; if we judge of sense, and nonsense, by the original and proper signification of words. For the *will itself* is not an Agent that *has a will:* the power of choosing itself, has not a power of choosing. That which has the power of volition or choice is the man or the soul, and not the power of volition itself. And he that has the Liberty of doing according to his will, is the Agent or doer who is possessed of the will; and not the will which he is possessed of. We say with propriety, that a bird let loose has power and Liberty to fly; but not that the bird's power of flying has a power and Liberty of flying. To be free is the property of an Agent, who is possessed of powers and faculties, as much as to be cunning, valiant, bountiful, or zealous. But these qualities are the properties of men or persons; and not the properties of properties.

There are two things that are contrary to this which is called Liberty in common speech. One is *constraint;* the same is otherwise called *force, compulsion,* and *coaction;* which is a person's being necessitated to do a thing *contrary* to his will. The other is *restraint;* which is his being hindered, and not having power to do *according* to his will. But that which has no will, cannot be the subject of these things.—I need say the less on this head, Mr. Locke having set the same thing forth, with so great clearness, in his *Essay on the Human Understanding.*

But one thing more I would observe concerning what is vulgarly called *Liberty;* namely, that power and opportunity for one to do and conduct as he will, or according to his choice, is all that is meant by it; without taking into the meaning of the word any thing of the cause or original of that choice; or at all considering how the person came to have such

a volition; whether it was caused by some external motive, or internal habitual bias; whether it was determined by some internal antecedent volition, or whether it happened without a cause; whether it was necessarily connected with something foregoing, or not connected. Let the person come by his volition or choice how he will, yet, if he is able, and there is nothing in the way to hinder his pursuing and executing his will, the man is fully and perfectly free, according to the primary and common notion of freedom.

What has been said may be sufficient to shew what is meant by *Liberty*, according to the common notions of mankind, and in the useful and primary acceptation of the word: but the word, as used by *Arminians*, *Pelagians* and others, who oppose the *Calvinists*, has an entirely different signification.—These several things belong to their notion of Liberty. 1. That it consists in a *self-determining power* in the will, or a certain sovereignty the will has over itself, and its own acts, whereby it determines its own volitions; so as not to be dependent in its determinations, on any cause without itself, nor determined by any thing prior to its own acts. 2. *Indifference* belongs to Liberty in their notion of it, or that the mind, previous to the act of volition be, *in equilibrio*. 3. *Contingence* is another thing that belongs and is essential to it; not in the common acceptation of the word, as that has been already explained, but as opposed to all *necessity*, or any fixed and certain connexion with some previous ground or reason of its existence. They suppose the essence of Liberty so much to consist in these things, that unless the will of man be free in this sense, he has no real freedom, howmuchsoever he may be at Liberty to act according to his will.

A *moral Agent* is a being that is capable of those

actions that have a moral quality, and which can properly be denominated good or evil in a moral ſenſe, virtuous or vicious, commendable or faulty. To moral Agency belongs a *moral faculty*, or ſenſe of moral good and evil, or of ſuch a thing as deſert or worthineſs, of praiſe or blame, reward or puniſhment; and a capacity which an Agent has of being influenced in his actions by moral inducements or motives, exhibited to the view of underſtanding and reaſon, to engage to a conduct agreeable to the moral faculty.

The ſun is very excellent and beneficial in its action and influence on the earth, in warming it, and cauſing it to bring forth its fruits; but it is not a moral Agent: its action, though good, is not virtuous or meritorious. Fire that breaks out in a city, and conſumes great part of it, is very miſchievous in its operation; but is not a moral Agent: what it does is not faulty or ſinful, or deſerving of any puniſhment. The brute creatures are not moral Agents: the actions of ſome of them are very profitable and pleaſant; others are very hurtful: yet, ſeeing they have no moral faculty, or ſenſe of deſert, and do not act from choice guided by underſtanding, or with a capacity of reaſoning and reflecting, but only from inſtinct, and are not capable of being influenced by moral inducements, their actions are not properly ſinful or virtuous; nor are they properly the ſubjects of any ſuch moral treatment for what they do, as moral Agents are for their faults or good deeds.

Here it may be noted, that there is a circumſtantial difference between the moral Agency of a *ruler* and a *ſubject*. I call it *circumſtantial*, becauſe it lies only in the difference of moral inducements they are capable of being influenced by, ariſing from the difference of *circumſtances*. A *ruler* acting in that ca-

pacity only, is not capable of being influenced by a moral law, and its ſanctions of threatenings and promiſes, rewards and puniſhments, as the *ſubject* is; though both may be influenced by a knowledge of moral good and evil. And therefore the moral agency of the Supreme Being, who acts only in the capacity of a *ruler* towards his creatures, and never as a *ſubject*, differs in that reſpect from the moral Agency of created intelligent begins. God's actions, and particularly thoſe which he exerts as a moral governor, have moral qualifications, are morally good in the higheſt degree. They are moſt perfectly holy and righteous; and we muſt conceive of Him as influenced in the higheſt degree, by that which, above all others, is properly a moral inducement, *viz.* the moral good which He ſees in ſuch and ſuch things: and therefore He is, in the moſt proper ſenſe, a moral Agent, the ſource of all moral ability and Agency, the fountain and rule of all virtue and moral good; though by reaſon of his being ſupreme over all, it is not poſſible He ſhould be under the influence of law or command, promiſes or threatenings, rewards or puniſhments, counſels or warnings. The eſſential qualities of a moral Agent are in God, in the greateſt poſſible perfection; ſuch as underſtanding, to perceive the difference between moral good and evil; a capacity of diſcerning that moral worthineſs and demerit, by which ſome things are praiſe-worthy, others deſerving of blame and puniſhment; and alſo a capacity of choice, and choice guided by underſtanding, and a power of acting according to his choice or pleaſure, and being capable of doing thoſe things which are in the higheſt ſenſe praiſe-worthy. And herein does very much conſiſt that image of God wherein he made man, (which we read of, *Gen.* I. 26, 27. and *Chap.* IX. 6.) by which God diſtinguiſhed man from the beaſts, *viz.* in thoſe faculties and

principles of nature, whereby He is capable of moral Agency. Herein very much consists the *natural* image of God; as his *spiritual* and *moral* image, wherein man was made at first, consisted in that moral excellency, that he was endowed with.

PART II.

Wherein it is considered whether there is or can be any such Sort of FREEDOM OF WILL, *as that wherein* Arminians *place the Essence of the Liberty of all moral Agents; and whether any such Thing ever* was *or* can be *conceived of.*

SECTION I.

Shewing the manifest Inconsistence of the Arminian *Notion of* Liberty of Will, *consisting in the Will's* self-determining Power.

HAVING taken notice of those things which may be necessary to be observed, concerning the meaning of the principal terms and phrases made use of in controversies concerning human Liberty, and particularly observed what *Liberty* is according to the common language and general apprehension of mankind, and what it is as understood and maintained by *Arminians;* I proceed to consider the *Arminian* notion of the *Freedom of the Will*, and the supposed necessity of it in order to moral agency, or in order to any one's being capable of virtue or vice, and properly the subject of command or counsel, praise or blame, promises or threatenings, rewards or punishments; or whether that which has been described, as the thing meant by Liberty in common speech, be not sufficient, and the only Liberty which makes or can make any one a moral agent, and so properly the subject of these things. In *this Part,* I shall con-

sider whether any such thing be possible or conceivable, as that Freedom of Will which *Arminians* insist on; and shall enquire, whether any such sort of Liberty be necessary to moral agency, *&c.* in the *next* Part.

And first of all, I shall consider the notion of *a self-determining Power* in the will: wherein, according to the *Arminians*, does most essentially consist the Will's Freedom; and shall particularly enquire, whether it be not plainly absurd, and a manifest inconsistence, to suppose that *the will itself determines all the free acts of the Will.*

Here I shall not insist on the great impropriety of such phrases and ways of speaking as *the Will's determining itself;* because actions are to be ascribed to agents, and not properly to the powers of agents; which improper way of speaking leads to many mistakes, and much confusion, as Mr. Locke observes. But I shall suppose that the *Arminians*, when they speak of the Will's determining itself, do by the *Will* mean the *soul willing*. I shall take it for granted, that when they speak of the Will, as the determiner, they mean *the soul in the exercise of a power of willing*, or acting voluntarily. I shall suppose this to be their meaning, because nothing else can be meant, without the grossest and plainest absurdity. In all cases when we speak of the powers or principles of acting, as doing such things, we mean that the agents which have these Powers of acting, do them in the exercise of those Powers. So when we say, valour fights courageously, we mean, the man who is under the influence of valour fights courageously. When we say, love seeks the object loved, we mean, the person loving seeks that object. When we say, the understanding discerns, we mean the soul in the exercise of that faculty. So when it is said, the will decides or determines, the meaning must be, that the person in

the exerciſe of a Power of willing and chooſing, or the ſoul acting voluntarily, determines.

Therefore, if the Will determines all its own free acts, the ſoul determines all the free acts of the Will in the exerciſe of a Power of willing and chooſing; or, which is the ſame thing, it determines them of choice; it determines its own acts by chooſing its own acts. If the Will determines the Will, then choice orders and determines the choice: and acts of choice are ſubject to the deciſion, and follow the conduct of other acts of choice. And therefore if the Will determines all its own free acts, then every free act of choice is determined by a preceding act of choice, chooſing that act. And if that preceding act of the Will or choice be alſo a free act, then by theſe principles, in this act too, the Will is ſelf-determined: that is, this, in like manner, is an act that the ſoul voluntarily chooſes; or, which is the ſame thing, it is an act determined ſtill by a preceding act of the Will, chooſing that. And the like may again be obſerved of the laſt mentioned act; which brings us directly to a contradiction: for it ſuppoſes an act of the Will preceding the firſt act in the whole train, directing and determining the reſt; or a free act of the Will, before the firſt free act of the Will. Or elſe we muſt come at laſt to an act of the Will, determining the conſequent acts, wherein the Will is not ſelf-determined, and ſo is not a free act, in this notion of freedom: but if the firſt act in the train, determining and fixing the reſt, be not free, none of them all can be free; as is manifeſt at firſt view, but ſhall be demonſtrated preſently.

If the Will, which we find governs the members of the body and determines and commands their motions and actions, does alſo govern itſelf, and determine its own motions and actions, it doubtleſs determines them the ſame way, even by antecedent

volitions. The Will determines which way the hands and feet ſhall move, by an act of volition or choice: and there is no other way of the Will's determining, directing or commanding any thing at all. Whatſoever the Will commands, it commands by an act of the Will. And if it has itſelf under its command, and determines itſelf in its own actions, it doubtleſs does it the ſame way that it determines other things which are under its command. So that if the freedom of the Will conſiſts in this, that it has itſelf and its own actions under its command and direction, and its own volitions are determined by itſelf, it will follow, that every free volition ariſes from another antecedent volition, directing and commanding that: and if that *directing* volition be alſo free, in that alſo the Will is determined: that is to ſay, that directing volition is determined by another going before that; and ſo on, until we come to the firſt volition in the whole ſeries: and if that firſt volition be free, and the Will ſelf-determined in it, then that is determined by another volition preceding that: which is a contradiction; becauſe by the ſuppoſition, it can have none before it to direct or determine it, being the firſt in the train. But if that firſt volition is not determined by any preceding act of the Will, then that act is not determined by the Will, and ſo is not free in the *Arminian* notion of freedom, which conſiſts in the Will's ſelf-determination. And if that firſt act of the Will, which determines and fixes the ſubſequent acts, be not free, none of the following acts, which are determined by it, can be free. If we ſuppoſe there are five acts in the train, the fifth and laſt determined by the fourth, and the fourth by the third, the third by the ſecond, and the ſecond by the firſt; if the firſt is not determined by the Will, and ſo not free, then none of them are truly determined by the Will: that is, that

each of them are as they are, and not otherwiſe, is not firſt owing to the Will, but to the determination of the firſt in the ſeries, which is not dependent on the Will, and is that which the Will has no hand in the determination of. And this being that which decides what the reſt ſhall be, and determines their exiſtence; therefore the firſt determination of their exiſtence is not from the Will. The caſe is juſt the ſame, if inſtead of a chain of five acts of the Will, we ſhould ſuppoſe a ſucceſſion of ten, or an hundred, or ten thouſand. If the firſt act be not free, being determined by ſomething out of the Will, and this determines the next to be agreeable to itſelf, and that the next, and ſo on; they are none of them free, but all originally depend on, and are determined by ſome cauſe out of the Will: and ſo all freedom in the caſe is excluded, and no act of the Will can be free, according to this notion of freedom. If we ſhould ſuppoſe a long chain of ten thouſand links, ſo connected, that if the firſt link moves, it will move the next, and that the next; and ſo the whole chain muſt be determined to motion, and in the direction of its motion, by the motion of the firſt link; and that is moved by ſomething elſe: in this caſe, though all the links, but one, are moved by other parts of the ſame chain; yet it appears that the motion of no one, nor the direction of its motion, is from any ſelf-moving or ſelf-determining Power in the chain, any more than if every link were immediately moved by ſomething that did not belong to the chain. If the Will be not free in the firſt act, which cauſes the next, then neither is it free in the next, which is cauſed by that firſt act: for though indeed the Will cauſed it, yet it did not cauſe it freely; becauſe the preceding act, by which it was cauſed, was not free. And again, if the will be not free in the ſecond act, ſo neither can it be in the third, which is cauſed by

that; becauſe in like manner, that third was determined by an act of the Will that was not free. And ſo we may go on to the next act, and from that to the next; and how long ſoever the ſucceſſion of acts is, it is all one; if the firſt on which the whole chain depends, and which determines all the reſt, be not a free act, the will is not free in cauſing or determining any one of thoſe acts; becauſe the act by which it determines them all, is not a free act; and therefore the Will is no more free in determining them than if it did not cauſe them at all. Thus, this *Arminian* notion of Liberty of the Will, conſiſting in the Will's *Self-determination*, is repugnant to itſelf, and ſhuts itſelf wholly out of the world.

Section II.

Several ſuppoſed Ways of Evading *the foregoing Reaſoning conſidered.*

If to evade the force of what has been obſerved, it ſhould be ſaid, that when the *Arminians* ſpeak of the Will's determining its own acts, they do not mean that the Will determines its acts by any preceding act, or that one act of the Will determines another; but only that the faculty or power of Will, or the ſoul in the uſe of that power, determines its own volitions; and that it does it without any act going before the act determined; ſuch an evaſion would be full of the moſt groſs abſurdity.——I confeſs, it is an evaſion of my own inventing; and I do not know but I ſhould wrong the *Arminians*, in ſuppoſing that any of them would make uſe of it. But it being as good a one as I can invent, I would obſerve upon it a few things.

Firſt—If the faculty or power of the will determines an act of volition, or the ſoul in the *uſe* or *exerciſe of that power*, determines it, that is the ſame thing as for the ſoul to determine volition *by an act of Will*. For an *exerciſe* of the power of Will, and an *act* of that power, are the ſame thing. Therefore to ſay, that the power of Will, or the ſoul in the *uſe* or *exerciſe* of that power, determines vilition, without an *act* of Will preceding the volition determined, is a contradiction.

Secondly—If a power of Will determines the act of the will, then a power of chooſing determines it. For, as was before obſerved, in every act of Will, there is choice, and a power of willing is a power of chooſing. But if a power of chooſing determines the act of volition, it determines it by chooſing it. For it is moſt abſurd to ſay, that a power of chooſing determines one thing rather than another, without chooſing any thing. But if a power of chooſing determines volition by chooſing it, then here is the act of volition determined by an antecedent choice, chooſing that volition.

Thirdly—To ſay, the faculty, or the ſoul, determines its own volition, but not by any act, is a contradiction. Becauſe for the ſoul to *direct*, *decide*, or *determine* any thing, is to act; and this is ſuppoſed; for the ſoul is here ſpoken of as being a cauſe in this affair, bringing ſomething to paſs, or doing ſomething; or, which is the ſame thing, exerting itſelf in order to an effect, which effect is the determination of volition, or the particular kind and manner of an act of Will. But certainly this exertion or action is not the ſame with the effect, in order to the production of which it is exerted; but muſt be ſomething prior to it.

Again—The advocates for this notion of the freedom of the Will, ſpeak of a certain *ſovereignty* in

the Will, whereby it has power to determine its own volitions. And therefore the determination of volition muſt itſelf be an act of the Will; for otherwiſe it can be no exerciſe of that ſuppoſed power and ſovereignty.

Again—If the Will determines itſelf, then either the Will is *active* in determining its volitions, or it is not. If it be active in it, then the determination is an *act* of the Will; and ſo there is one act of the Will determining another. But if the Will is not *active* in the determination, then how does it *exerciſe* any liberty in it? Theſe gentlemen ſuppoſe that the thing wherein the Will *exerciſes* liberty, is in its determining its own acts. But how can this be, if it be not *active* in determining? Certainly the Will, or the ſoul, cannot *exerciſe any liberty* in that wherein it doth not *act*, or wherein it doth not *exerciſe itſelf*. So that if either part of this dilemma be taken, this ſcheme of liberty, conſiſting in ſelf-determining power, is overthrown. If there be an act of the Will in determining all its own free acts, then one free act of the Will is determined by another; and ſo we have the abſurdity of every free act, even the very firſt, determined by a foregoing free act. But if there be no act or exerciſe of the Will in determining its own acts, then no liberty is exerciſed in determining them. From whence it follows, that no liberty conſiſts in the Will's power to determine its own acts: or, which is the ſame thing, that there is no ſuch thing as liberty conſiſting in a ſelf-determining power of the Will.

If it ſhould be ſaid, That although it be true, if the ſoul determines its own volitions, it muſt be active in ſo doing, and the determination itſelf muſt be an act; yet there is no need of ſuppoſing this act to be prior to the volition determined; but the Will or ſoul determines the act of the Will *in willing*; it

determines its own volition, *in* the very act of volition; it directs and limits the act of the Will, cauſing it to be ſo and not otherwiſe, *in* exerting the act, without any preceding act to exert that. If any ſhould ſay after this manner, they muſt mean one of theſe three things: Either, (1.) That the determining act, though it be before the act determined in the order of nature, yet is not before it in order of time. Or, (2.) That the determining act is not before the act determined, either in the order of time or nature, nor is truly diſtinct from it; but that the ſoul's determining the act of volition is the ſame thing with its exerting ſuch a particular act, is its cauſing and determining the act. Or, (3.) That volition has no cauſe and is no effect; but comes into exiſtence, with ſuch a particular determination, without any ground or reaſon of its exiſtence and determination. I ſhall conſider theſe diſtinctly.

(1.) If all that is meant, be, that the determining act is not before the act determined in order of *time*, it will not help the caſe at all, though it ſhould be allowed. If it be before the determined act in the order of nature, being the cauſe or ground of its exiſtence, this as much proves it to be diſtinct from it, and independent of it, as if it were before in the order of time. As the cauſe of the particular motion of a natural body in a certain direction, may have no diſtance as to time, yet cannot be the ſame with the motion effected by it, but muſt be as diſtinct from it as any other cauſe that is before its effect in the order of time: as the architect is diſtinct from the houſe which he builds, or the father diſtinct from the ſon which he begets. And if the act of the Will determining be diſtinct from the act determined, and before it in the order of nature, then we can go back from one to another, till we come to the firſt in the ſeries, which has no act of the Will before it

in the order of nature, determining it; and conſequently is an act not determined by the Will, and ſo not a free act, in this notion of freedom. And this being the act which determines all the reſt, none of them are free acts. As when there is a chain of many links, the firſt of which only is taken hold of and drawn by hand; all the reſt may follow and be moved at the ſame inſtant, without any diſtance of time; but yet the motion of one link is before that of another in the order of nature; the laſt is moved by the next, and ſo till we come to the firſt; which not being moved by any other, but by ſomething diſtinct from the whole chain, this as much proves that no part is moved by any ſelf-moving power in the chain, as if the motion of one link followed that of another in the order of time.

(2.) If any ſhould ſay, that the determining act is not before the determined act, either in order of time, or of nature, nor is diſtinct from it; but that the *exertion* of the act is the *determination* of the act; that for the ſoul to exert a particular volition, is for it to cauſe and determine that act of volition: I would on this obſerve, that the thing in queſtion ſeems to be forgotten, or kept out of ſight, in a darkneſs and unintelligibleneſs of ſpeech; unleſs ſuch an objector would mean to contradict himſelf. The very act of volition itſelf is doubtleſs a determination of mind; *i. e.* it is the mind's drawing up a concluſion, or coming to a choice between two things, or more, propoſed to it. But determining among external *objects* of choice, is not the ſame with determining the *act* of choice itſelf, among various poſſible acts of choice.—The queſtion is, What influences, directs, or determines the mind or Will to come to ſuch a concluſion or choice as it does? Or what is the cauſe, ground or reaſon, why it concludes thus, and not otherwiſe? Now it muſt be anſwered, according

to the *Arminian* notion of freedom, that the Will influences, orders and determines itſelf thus to act. And if it does, I ſay, it muſt be by ſome antecedent act. To ſay, it is cauſed, influenced and determined by ſomething, and yet not determined by any thing antecedent, either in order of time or nature, is a contradiction. For that is what is meant by a thing's being prior in the order of nature, that it is ſome way the cauſe or reaſon of the thing, with reſpect to which it is ſaid to be prior.

If the particular act or exertion of Will, which comes into exiſtence, be any thing properly determined at all, then it has ſome cauſe of its exiſting, and of its exiſting in ſuch a particular determinate manner, and not another; ſome cauſe, whoſe influence *decides the matter:* which cauſe is diſtinct from the effect, and prior to it. But to ſay, that the Will or mind orders, influences and determines itſelf to exert ſuch an act as it does, by the very exertion itſelf, is to make the exertion both cauſe and effect; or the exerting ſuch an act, to be a cauſe of the exertion of ſuch an act. For the queſtion is, What is the cauſe and reaſon of the ſoul's exerting ſuch an act? To which the anſwer is, The ſoul exerts ſuch an act, and that is the cauſe of it. And ſo, by this, the exertion muſt be prior in the order of nature to itſelf, and diſtinct from itſelf.

(3.) If the meaning be, that the ſoul's exertion of ſuch a particular act of Will, is a thing that comes to paſs *of itſelf*, without any cauſe; and that there is abſolutely no ground or reaſon of the ſoul's being determined to exert ſuch a volition, and make ſuch a choice, rather than another, I ſay, if this be the meaning of *Arminians*, when they contend ſo earneſtly for the Will's determining its own acts, and for liberty of Will conſiſting in ſelf-determining power; they do nothing but confound themſelves and oth-

ers with words without meaning. In the queſtion, *What determines the Will?* and in their anſwer, that *the Will determines itſelf*, and in all the diſpute about it, it ſeems to be taken for granted, that ſomething determines the Will; and the controverſy on this head is not, whether any thing at all determines it, or whether its determination has any cauſe or foundation at all: but where the foundation of it is, whether in the Will itſelf, or ſomewhere elſe. But if the thing intended be what is abovementioned, then all comes to this, that nothing at all determines the Will; volition having abſolutely no cauſe or foundation of its exiſtence, either within, or without. There is a great noiſe made about ſelf-determining power, as the ſource of all free acts of the Will: but when the matter comes to be explained, the meaning is, that no power at all is the ſource of theſe acts, neither ſelf-determining power, nor any other, but they ariſe from nothing; no cauſe, no power, no influence, being at all concerned in the matter.

However, this very thing, even that the free acts of the Will are events which come to paſs without a cauſe, is certainly implied in the *Arminian* notion of liberty of Will; though it be very inconſiſtent with many other things in their ſcheme, and repugnant to ſome things implied in their notion of liberty. Their opinion implies, that the particular determination of volition is without any cauſe; becauſe they hold the free acts of the Will to be *contingent* events; and contingence is eſſential to freedom in their notion of it. But certainly, thoſe things which have a prior ground and reaſon of their particular exiſtence, a cauſe which antecedently determines them to be, and determines them to be juſt as they are, do not happen contingently. If ſomething foregoing, by a caſual influence and connexion, determines and fixes preciſely their coming to paſs,

and the manner of it, then it does not remain a contingent thing whether they ſhall come to paſs or no.

And becauſe it is a queſtion, in many reſpects, very important in this controverſy about the freedom of Will, *whether the free acts of the Will are events which come to paſs without a cauſe?* I ſhall be particular in examining this point in the two following ſections.

Section III.

Whether any Event whatſoever, and Volition *in particular, can come to paſs* without *a* Cauſe *of its exiſtence.*

Before I enter on any argument on this ſubject, I would explain how I would be underſtood, when I uſe the word *Cauſe* in this diſcourſe: ſince, for want of a better word, I ſhall have occaſion to uſe it in a ſenſe which is more extenſive, than that in which it is ſometimes uſed. The word is often uſed in ſo reſtrained a ſenſe as to ſignify only that which has a *poſitive efficiency* or influence *to produce* a thing, or bring it to paſs. But there are many things which have no ſuch poſitive productive influence; which yet are Cauſes in that reſpect, that they have truly the nature of a ground or reaſon why ſome things are, rather than others; or why they are as they are, rather than otherwiſe. Thus the abſence of the ſun in the night, is not the Cauſe of the falling of the dew at that time, in the ſame manner as its beams are the Cauſe of the aſcending of the vapours in the day-time; and its withdrawment in the winter, is not in the ſame manner the Cauſe of the freezing of the waters, as its approach in the ſpring is the Cauſe

of their thawing. But yet the withdrawment or abſence of the ſun is an antecedent, with which theſe effects in the night and winter are connected, and on which they depend; and is one thing that belongs to the ground and reaſon why they come to paſs at that time, rather than at other times; though the abſence of the ſun is nothing poſitive, nor has any poſitive influence.

It may be further obſerved, that when I ſpeak of *connexion of Cauſes and Effects*, I have reſpect to *moral* Cauſes, as well as thoſe that are called *natural* in diſtinction from them. Moral Cauſes may be Cauſes in as proper a ſenſe, as any cauſes whatſoever; may have as real an influence, and may as truly be the ground and reaſon of an Event's coming to paſs.

Therefore I ſometimes uſe the word *Cauſe*, in this enquiry, to ſignify any *antecedent*, either natural or moral, poſitive or negative, on which an Event, either a thing, or the manner and circumſtance of a thing, ſo depends, that it is the ground and reaſon, either in whole, or in part, why it is, rather than not; or why it is as it is, rather than otherwiſe; or, in other words, any antecedent with which a conſequent Event is ſo connected, that it truly belongs to the reaſon why the propoſition which affirms that Event, is true; whether it has any poſitive influence or not. And in an agreeableneſs to this, I ſometimes uſe the word effect for the conſequence of another thing, which is perhaps rather an occaſion than a Cauſe, moſt properly ſpeaking.

I am the more careful thus to explain my meaning, that I may cut off occaſion, from any that might ſeek occaſion to cavil and object againſt ſome things which I may ſay concerning the dependence of all things which come to paſs, on ſome Cauſe, and their connexion with their Cauſe.

Having thus explained what I mean by *Cauſe*, I aſſert that nothing ever comes to paſs without a Cauſe. What is ſelf-exiſtent muſt be from eternity, and muſt be unchangeable : but as to all things that *begin to be*, they are not ſelf-exiſtent and therefore muſt have ſome foundation of their exiſtence without themſelves.——That whatſoever begins to be, which before was not, muſt have a Cauſe why it then begins to exiſt, ſeems to be the firſt dictate of the common and natural ſenſe which God hath implanted in the minds of all mankind, and the main foundation of all our reaſonings about the exiſtence of things, paſt, preſent, or to come.

And this dictate of common ſenſe equally reſpects ſubſtances and modes, or things and the manner and circumſtances of things. Thus, if we ſee a body which has hitherto been at reſt, ſtart out of a ſtate of reſt, and begin to move, we do as naturally and neceſſarily ſuppoſe there is ſome Cauſe or reaſon of this new mode of exiſtence, as of the exiſtence of a body itſelf which had hitherto not exiſted. And ſo if a body, which had hitherto moved in a certain direction, ſhould ſuddenly change the direction of its motion ; or if it ſhould put off its old figure, and take a new one ; or change its colour : the beginning of theſe new modes is a new Event, and the mind of mankind neceſſarily ſuppoſes that there is ſome Cauſe or reaſon of them.

If this grand principle of common ſenſe be taken away, all arguing from effects to Cauſes ceaſeth, and ſo all knowledge of any exiſtence, beſides what we have by the moſt direct and immediate intuition. Particularly all our proof of the being of God ceaſes : we argue His being from our own being, and the being of other things, which we are ſenſible once were not, but have begun to be ; and from the being of the world, with all its conſtituent

parts, and the manner of their existence; all which we see plainly are not necessary in their own nature, and so not self-existent, and therefore must have a Cause. But if things, not in themselves necessary, may begin to be without a Cause, all this arguing is vain.

Indeed, I will not affirm, that there is in the nature of things no foundation for the knowledge of the Being of God without any evidence of it from His works. I do suppose there is a great absurdity in the nature of things simply considered, in supposing that there should be no God, or in denying Being in general, and supposing an eternal, absolute, universal nothing: and therefore that here would be foundation of intuitive evidence that it cannot be, and that eternal, infinite, most perfect Being must be; if we had strength and comprehension of mind sufficient, to have a clear idea of general and universal Being, or, which is the same thing, of the infinite, eternal, most perfect Divine Nature and Essence. But then we should not properly come to the knowledge of the Being of God by arguing: but our evidence would be intuitive: we should see it, as we see other things that are necessary in themselves, the contraries of which are in their own nature absurd and contradictory; as we see that twice two is four; and as we see that a circle has no angles. If we had as clear an idea of universal infinite entity, as we have of these other things, I suppose we should most intuitively see the absurdity of supposing such Being not to be; should immediately see there is no room for the question, whether it is possible that Being, in the most general abstracted notion of it, should not be. But we have not that strength and extent of mind, to know this certainly in this intuitive independent manner: but the way that mankind come to the knowledge

of the Being of God, is that which the apoſtle ſpeaks of, Rom. i. 20. *The inviſible things of Him, from the creation of the world, are clearly ſeen; being underſtood by the things that are made; even his eternal power and Godhead.* We *firſt aſcend*, and prove *a poſteriori*, or from effects, that there muſt be an eternal Cauſe; and then *ſecondly*, prove by argumentation, not intuition, that this Being muſt be neceſſarily exiſtent; and then *thirdly*, from the proved neceſſity of his exiſtence, we may *deſcend*, and prove many of his perfections *a priori*.

But if once this grand principle of common ſenſe be given up, that *what is not neceſſary in itſelf, muſt have a Cauſe;* and we begin to maintain, that things may come into exiſtence, and begin to be, which heretofore have not been, of themſelves, without any Cauſe; all our means of aſcending in our arguing from the creature to the Creator, and all our evidence of the Being of God, is cut off at one blow. In this caſe, we cannot prove that there is a God, either from the Being of the world, and the creatures in it, or from the manner of their being, their order, beauty and uſe. For if things may come into exiſtence without any Cauſe at all, then they doubtleſs may without any Cauſe anſwerable to the effect. Our minds do alike naturally ſuppoſe and determine both theſe things; namely, that what begins to be has a Cauſe, and alſo that it has a Cauſe proportionable and agreeable to the effect. The ſame principle which leads us to determine, that there cannot be any thing coming to paſs without a Cauſe, leads us to determine that there cannot be more in the effect than in the Cauſe.

Yea, if once it ſhould be allowed, that things may come to paſs without a Cauſe, we ſhould not only have no proof of the Being of God, but we ſhould be without evidence of the exiſtence of any thing

whatsoever, but our own immediately present ideas and consciousness. For we have no way to prove any thing else, but by arguing from effects to Causes: from the ideas now immediately in view: we argue other things not immediately in view: from sensations now excited in us, we infer the existence of things without us, as the Causes of these sensations: and from the existence of these things, we argue other things, which they depend on, as effects on Causes. We infer the past existence of ourselves, or any thing else, by memory; only as we argue, that the ideas, which are now in our minds, are the consequences of past ideas and sensations.—We immediately perceive nothing else but the ideas which are this moment extant in our minds. We perceive or know other things only *by means* of these, as necessarily connected with others, and dependent on them. But if things may be without Causes, all this necessary connexion and dependence is dissolved, and so all means of our knowledge is gone. If there be no absurdity or difficulty in supposing one thing to start out of non-existence, into being, of itself without a Cause; then there is no absurdity or difficulty in supposing the same of millions of millions. For nothing, or no difficulty multiplied, still is nothing, or no difficulty: nothing multiplied by nothing, don't increase the sum.

And indeed, according to the hypothesis I am opposing, of the acts of the Will coming to pass without a Cause, it is the case in fact, that millions of millions of Events are continually coming into existence *contingently*, without any Cause or reason why they do so, all over the world, every day and hour, through all ages. So it is in a constant succession, in every moral agent. This contingency, this efficient nothing, this effectual No-Cause, is always ready at hand, to produce this sort of effects,

as long as the agent exiſts, and as often as he has occaſion.

If it were ſo, that things only of one kind, *viz.* acts of the Will, ſeemed to come to paſs of themſelves; but thoſe of this ſort in general came into being thus; and it were an event that was continual, and that happened in a courſe, wherever there were capable ſubjects of ſuch events; this very thing would demonſtrate that there was ſome Cauſe of them, which made ſuch a difference between this Event and others, and that they did not really happen contingently. For contingence is blind, and does not pick and chooſe for a particular ſort of Events. Nothing has no choice. This No-Cauſe, which cauſes no exiſtence, cannot Cauſe the exiſtence which comes to paſs, to be of one particular ſort only, diſtinguiſhed from all others. Thus, that only one ſort of matter drops out of the heavens, even water, and that this comes ſo often, ſo conſtantly and plentifully, all over the world, in all ages, ſhows that their is ſome Cauſe or reaſon of the falling of water out of the heavens; and that ſomething beſides mere contingence has a hand in the matter.

If we ſhould ſuppoſe non-entity to be about to bring forth; and things were coming into exiſtence, without any Cauſe or antecedent, on which the exiſtence, or kind, or manner of exiſtence depends; or which could at all determine whether the things ſhould be ſtones, or ſtars, or beaſts, or angels, or human bodies, or ſouls, or only ſome new motion or figure in natural bodies, or ſome new ſenſations in animals, or new ideas in the human underſtanding, or new volitions in the Will; or any thing elſe of all the infinite number of poſſibles; then certainly it would not be expected, although many millions of millions of things are coming into exiſtence in this manner, all over the face of the earth, that they

should all be only of one particular kind, and that it should be thus in all ages, and that this sort of existences should never fail to come to pass where there is room for them, or a subject capable of them, and that constantly, whenever there is occasion for them.

If any should imagine, there is something in the sort of Event that renders it possible for it to come into existence without a Cause, and should say, that the free acts of the Will are existences of an exceeding different nature from other things; by reason of which they may come into existence without any previous ground or reason of it, though other things cannot; if they make this objection in good earnest, it would be an evidence of their strangely forgetting themselves: for they would be giving an account of some ground of the existence of a thing, when at the same time they would maintain there is no ground of its existence. Therefore I would observe, that the particular nature of existence, be it never so diverse from others, can lay no foundation for that thing's coming into existence without a Cause; because to suppose this, would be to suppose the particular nature of existence to be a thing prior to the existence; and so a thing which makes way for existence, with such a circumstance, namely, without a cause or reason of existence. But that which in any respect makes way for a thing's coming into being, or for any manner or circumstance of its first existence, must be prior to the existence. The distinguished nature of the effect, which is something belonging to the effect, cannot have influence backward, to act before it is. The peculiar nature of that thing called volition, can do nothing, can have no influence, while it is not. And afterwards it is too late for its influence: for then the thing has made sure of existence already, without its help.

So that it is indeed as repugnant to reaſon, to ſuppoſe that an act of the Will ſhould come into exiſtence without a Cauſe, as to ſuppoſe the human ſoul, or an angel, or the globe of the earth, or the whole univerſe, ſhould come into exiſtence without a Cauſe. And if once we allow, that ſuch a ſort of effect as a Volition may come to paſs without a Cauſe, how do we know but that many other ſorts of effects may do ſo too? It is not the particular kind of effect that makes the abſurdity of ſuppoſing it has being without a Cauſe, but ſomething which is common to all things that ever begin to be, *viz.* That they are not ſelf-exiſtent, or neceſſary in the nature of things.

Section IV.

Whether Volition *can ariſe without a Cauſe through the* Activity *of the Nature of the Soul.*

The author of the *Eſſay on the Freedom of the Will in God and the Creatures,* in anſwer to that objection againſt his doctrine of ſelf-determining power in the will, (p. 68, 69.) *That nothing is, or comes to paſs, without a ſufficient reaſon why it is, and why it is in this manner rather than another,* allows that it is thus in corporeal things, *which are, properly and philoſophically ſpeaking, paſſive being;* but denies that it is thus in *ſpirits, which are beings of an active nature, who have the ſpring of action within themſelves, and can determine themſelves.* By which it is plainly ſuppoſed, that ſuch an event as an act of the Will, may come to paſs in a ſpirit, without a ſufficient reaſon why it come to paſs, or why it is after this manner, rather than another; by reaſon of the activity of the

nature of a spirit.—But certainly this author, in this matter, must be very unwary and inadvertent. For,

1. The objection or difficulty proposed by this author, seems to be forgotten in his answer or solution. The very difficulty, as he himself proposes it, is this: How an event can *come to pass without a sufficient reason why it is, or why it is in this manner rather than another?* Instead of solving this difficulty, or answering this question with regard to Volition, as he proposes, he forgets himself, and answers another question quite diverse, and wholly inconsistent with this, *viz.* What is a sufficient reason why it is, and why it is in this manner rather than another? And he assigns the active being's own determination as the Cause, and a Cause sufficient for the effect; and leaves all the difficulty unresolved, and the question unanswered, which yet returns, even, How the soul's own determination, which he speaks of, came to exist, and to be what it was without a Cause? The activity of the soul may enable it to be the Cause of effects; but it does not at all enable or help it to be the subject of effects which have no Cause; which is the thing this author supposes concerning acts of the Will. Activity of nature will no more enable a being to produce effects, and determine the manner of their existence, *within* itself, without a Cause, than *out of* itself, in some other being. But if an active being should, through its activity, produce and determine an effect in some external object, how absurd would it be to say, that the effect was produced without a Cause!

2. The question is not so much, How a spirit endowed with activity comes to act, as why it exerts such an act, and not another; or why it acts with such a particular determination? If activity of nature be the Cause why a spirit (the soul of man for

inſtance) acts, and does not lie ſtill; yet that alone is not the Cauſe why its action is thus and thus limited, directed and determined. Active nature is a general thing; it is an ability or tendency of nature to action, generally taken; which may be a Cauſe why the ſoul acts as occaſion or reaſon is given; but this alone cannot be a ſufficient Cauſe why the ſoul exerts ſuch a *particular* act, at ſuch a time, rather than others. In order to this, there muſt be ſomething beſides a *general* tendency to action; there muſt alſo be a *particular* tendency to that individual action.—If it ſhould be aſked, why the ſoul of man uſes its activity in ſuch a manner as it does; and it ſhould be anſwered, that the ſoul uſes its activity thus, rather than otherwiſe, becauſe it has activity; would ſuch an anſwer ſatisfy a rational man? Would it not rather be looked upon as a very impertinent one?

3. An active being can bring no effects to paſs by his activity, but what are conſequent upon his acting: he produces nothing by his activity, any other way than by the exerciſe of his activity, and ſo nothing but the fruits of its exerciſe: he brings nothing to paſs by a dormant activity. But the exerciſe of his activity is action; and ſo his action, or exerciſe of his activity, muſt be prior to the effects of his activity. If an active being produces an effect in another being, about which his activity is converſant, the effect being the fruit of his activity, his activity muſt be firſt exerciſed or exerted, and the effect of it muſt follow. So it muſt be, with equal reaſon, if the active being is his own object, and his activity converſant about himſelf, to produce and determine ſome effect in himſelf; ſtill the exerciſe of his activity muſt go before the effect, which he brings to paſs and determines by it. And therefore his activity cannot be the Cauſe of the de-

termination of the first action, or exercise of activity itself, whence the effects of activity arise; for that would imply a contradiction; it would be to say, the first exercise of activity is before the first exercise of activity, and is the Cause of it.

4. That the soul, though an active substance, cannot *diversify* its own acts, but by first acting; or be a determining Cause of *different* acts, or any different effects, sometimes of one kind, and sometimes of another, any other way than in consequence of its own diverse acts, is manifest by this; that if so, then the *same* Cause, the *same* causal Power, Force and Influence, *without variation in any respect*, would produce *different* effects at different times. For the same substance of the soul before it acts, and the same active nature of the soul before it is exerted (*i. e.* before in the order of nature) would be the Cause of different effects, *viz.* Different Volitions at different times.—But the substance of the soul before it acts, and its active nature before it is exerted, are the same without variation. For it is some act that makes the first variation in the Cause, as to any causal exertion, force or influence. But if it be so, that the soul has no different causality, or diverse causal force or influence, in producing these diverse effects; then it is evident, that the soul has no influence, no hand in the diversity of the effect; and that the difference of the effect cannot be owing to any thing in the soul; or, which is the same thing, the soul does not determine the diversity of the effect; which is contrary to the supposition.—It is true, the substance of the soul before it acts, and before there is any difference in that respect, may be in a different state and circumstances: but those whom I oppose, will not allow the different circumstances of the soul to be the determining Causes of the acts of the Will; as being contrary to their notion of self-determination and self-motion.

5. Let us ſuppoſe, as theſe divines do, that there are no acts of the ſoul, ſtrictly ſpeaking, but free Volitions; then it will follow, that the ſoul is an active being in nothing further than it is a voluntary or elective being; and whenever it produces effects actively, it produces effects voluntarily and electively. But to produce effects thus, is the ſame thing as to produce effects *in conſequence of*, and *according to*, its own choice. And if ſo, then ſurely the ſoul does not by its activity produce all its own acts of Will or choice themſelves: for this, by the ſuppoſition, is to produce all its free acts of choice voluntarily and electively, or in conſequence of its own free acts of choice, which brings the matter directly to the forementioned contradiction, of a free act of choice before the firſt free act of choice. According to theſe gentlemen's own notion of action, if there ariſes in the mind a Volition without a free act of the Will or choice to determine and produce it, the mind is not the active voluntary Cauſe of that Volition; becauſe it does not ariſe from, nor is regulated by choice or deſign. And therefore it cannot be, that the mind ſhould be the active, voluntary, determining Cauſe of the firſt and leading Volition that relates to the affair.—The mind's being a *deſigning* Cauſe, only enables it to produce effects in conſequence of its *deſign;* it will not enable it to be the deſigning Cauſe of all its own deſigns. The mind's being an *elective* Cauſe, will only enable it to produce effects in conſequence of its *elections*, and according to them; but cannot enable it to be the elective Cauſe of all its own elections; becauſe that ſuppoſes an election before the firſt election. So the mind's being an *active* Cauſe enables it to produce effects in conſequence of its own *acts*, but cannot enable it to be the determining Cauſe of all its own *acts;* for that is ſtill in the ſame manner a contradiction; as

it supposes a determining act conversant about the first act, and prior to it, having a causal influence on its existence, and manner of existence.

I can conceive of nothing else that can be meant by the soul's having power to cause and determine its own Volitions, as a being to whom God has given a power of action, but this; that God has given power to the soul, sometimes at least, to excite Volitions at its pleasure, or according as it chooses.—And this certainly supposes, in all such cases, a choice preceding all Volitions which are thus caused, even the first of them; which runs into the forementioned great absurdity.

Therefore the activity of the nature of the soul affords no relief from the difficulties which the notion of a self-determining power in the Will is attended with, nor will it help, in the least, its absurdities and inconsistencies.

Section V.

Shewing, that if the things asserted in these Evasions should be supposed to be true, they are altogether impertinent, and cannot help the cause of Arminian *Liberty; and how (this being the state of the case)* Arminian *Writers are obliged to talk inconsistently.*

What was last observed in the preceding section may shew, not only that the active nature of the soul cannot be a reason why an act of the Will is, or why it is in this manner, rather than another; but also that if it could be so, and it could be proved that Volitions are contingent events, in that sense, that their being and manner of being is not fixed or determined by any cause, or any thing antecedent;

it would not at all ſerve the purpoſe of *Arminians*, to eſtabliſh the freedom of the Will, according to their notion of its freedom, as conſiſting in the Will's *determination of itſelf*; which ſuppoſes every free act of the Will to be determined by ſome act of the Will going before to determine it; inaſmuch as for the *Will* to determine a thing, is the ſame as for the ſoul to determine a thing by *willing*; and there is no way that the *Will* can determine an act of the Will, than by willing that act of the Will; or, which is the ſame thing, *chooſing* it. So that here muſt be two acts of the Will in the caſe, one going before another, one converſant about the other, and the latter the object of the former, and choſen by the former. If the Will does not cauſe and determine the act by choice, it does not cauſe or determine it at all; for that which is not determined by choice, is not determined voluntarily or *willingly*: and to ſay, that the Will determines ſomething which the ſoul does not determine willingly, is as much as to ſay, that ſomething is done by the Will, which the ſoul doth not with its Will.

So that if *Arminian* liberty of Will, conſiſting in the Will's determining its own acts, be maintained, the old abſurdity and contradiction muſt be maintained, that every free act of Will is cauſed and determined by a foregoing free act of Will; which doth not conſiſt with the free acts ariſing without any cauſe, and being ſo contingent, as not to be fixed by any thing foregoing. So that this evaſion muſt be given up, as not at all relieving, and as that which, inſtead of ſupporting this ſort of liberty, directly deſtroys it.

And if it ſhould be ſuppoſed, that the ſoul determines its own acts of Will ſome other way, than by a foregoing act of Will; ſtill it will not help the cauſe of their liberty of Will. If it determines them

by an act of the understanding, or some other power, then *the Will* does not determine *itself;* and so the *self-determining* power of the Will is given up. And what liberty is there exercised according to their own opinion of liberty, by the soul's being determined by something besides *its own choice?* The acts of the Will, it is true, may be directed, and effectually determined and fixed; but it is not done by the soul's own will and pleasure: there is no exercise at all of choice or Will in producing the effect: and if *Will* and choice are not exercised in it, how is the *liberty of the Will* exercised in it?

So that let *Arminians* turn which way they please with their notion of liberty, consisting in the Will's determining its own acts, their notion destroys itself. If they hold every free act of Will to be determined by the soul's own free choice, or foregoing free act of Will; *foregoing*, either in the order of time, or nature; it implies that gross contradiction, that the first free act belonging to the affair, is determined by a free act which is before it. Or if they say that the free acts of the Will are determined by some *other act* of the soul, and not an act of Will or choice, This also destroys their notion of liberty, consisting in the acts of the Will being determined by the *Will itself;* or if they hold that the acts of the Will are determined by *nothing at all* that is prior to them, but that they are contingent in that sense, that they are determined and fixed by no cause at all; this also destroys their notion of liberty, consisting in the Will's determining its own acts.

This being the true state of the *Arminian* notion of liberty, it hence comes to pass, that the writers that defend it are forced into gross inconsistencies, in what they say upon this subject. To instance in Dr. Whitby; he in his discourse on the freedom of

the Will, * oppoſes the opinion of the *Calviniſts*, who place man's liberty *only in a power of doing what he will*, as that wherein they plainly agree with Mr. Hobbes. And yet he himſelf mentions the very ſame notion of liberty, as the dictate of *the ſenſe and common reaſon of mankind, and a rule laid down by the light of nature*, viz. that *liberty is a power of acting from ourſelves, or DOING WHAT WE WILL.*† This is indeed, as he ſays, a thing agreeable to *the ſenſe and common reaſon of mankind ;* and therefore it is not ſo much to be wondered at, that he unawares acknowledges it againſt himſelf: for if liberty does not conſiſt in this, what elſe can be deviſed that it ſhould conſiſt in ? If it be ſaid, as Dr. Whitby elſwhere inſiſts, that it does not only conſiſt in liberty of *doing what we will*, but alſo a liberty of willing without neceſſity ; ſtill the queſtion returns, what does that liberty of willing without neceſſity conſiſt in, but in a power of willing *as we pleaſe*, without being impeded by a contrary neceſſity ? Or in other words, a liberty for the ſoul in its willing to act *according to its own choice ?* Yea, this very thing the ſame author ſeems to allow, and ſuppoſe again and again, in the uſe he makes of ſayings of the Fathers, whom he quotes as his vouchers. Thus he cites the words of Origen, which he produces as a teſtimony on his ſide ; ‡ *The ſoul acts by HER OWN CHOICE, and it is free for her to incline to whatever part SHE WILL.* And thoſe words of Juſtin Martyr ; § *The doctrine of the Chriſtians is this, that nothing is done or ſuffered according to fate, but that every man doth good or evil ACCORDING TO HIS OWN FREE CHOICE.* And from Euſebius, theſe words ; ‖ *If fate be eſtabliſhed,*

* In his Book on the five Points, Second Edit. p. 350, 351, 352. † Ibid. p. 325, 326. ‡ Ibid. p. 342. § Ibid. p. 360. ‖ Ibid. p. 363.

philosophy and piety are overthrown. All these things depending upon the necessity introduced by the stars, and not upon meditation and exercise PROCEEDING FROM OUR OWN FREE CHOICE. And again, the words of Maccarius; * *God, to preserve the liberty of man's Will, suffered their bodies to die, that it might be IN THEIR CHOICE to turn to good or evil.—They who are acted by the Holy Spirit, are not held under any necessity, but have liberty to turn themselves, and DO WHAT THEY WILL in this life.*

Thus, the doctor in effect comes into that very notion of liberty, which the Calvinists have; which he at the same time condemns, as agreeing with the opinion of Mr. Hobbes, namely, *the soul's acting by its own choice, men's doing good or evil according to their own free choice, their being in that exercise which proceeds from their own free choice, having it in their choice to turn to good or evil, and doing what they will.* So that if men exercise this liberty in the acts of the Will themselves, it must be in exerting acts of Will as they Will, *or according to their own* free *choice;* or exerting acts of Will *that proceed from their choice.* And if it be so, then let every one judge whether this does not suppose a free choice going before the free act of Will, or whether an act of choice does not go before that act of the Will which *proceeds from it.* And if it be thus with all free acts of the Will, then let every one judge, whether it will not follow that there is a free choice or Will going before the first free act of the Will exerted in the case. And then let every one judge, whether this be not a contradiction. And finally, let every one judge whether in the scheme of these writers there be any possibility of avoiding these absurdities.

* In his Book on the five Points, Second Edit. p. 369, 370.

If liberty conſiſts, as Dr. Whitby himſelf ſays, in a man's *doing what he will;* and a man exerciſes this liberty, not only in external actions, but in the acts of the Will themſelves; then ſo far as liberty is exerciſed in the latter, it conſiſts in *willing what he wills:* and if any ſay ſo, one of theſe two things muſt be meant, either, 1. That a man has power to Will, as he does Will; becauſe what he Wills, he Wills; and therefore has power to Will what he has power to Will. If this be their meaning, then all this mighty controverſy about freedom of the Will and ſelf-determining power, comes wholly to nothing; all that is contended for being no more than this, that the mind of man does what it does, and is the ſubject of what it is the ſubject of, or that what is, is; wherein none has any controverſy with them. Or, 2. The meaning muſt be, that a man has power to Will as he pleaſes or chooſes to Will: that is, he has power by one act of choice, to chooſe another; by an antecedent act of Will to chooſe a conſequent act; and therein to execute his own choice. And if this be their meaning, it is nothing but ſhuffling with thoſe they diſpute with, and baffling their own reaſon. For ſtill the queſtion returns, wherein lies man's liberty in that antecedent act of Will which choſe the conſequent act. The anſwer, according to the ſame principles, muſt be, that his liberty in this alſo lies in his willing as he would, or as he choſe, or agreeable to another act of choice preceding that. And ſo the queſtion returns *in infinitum* and the like anſwer muſt be made *in infinitum:* in order to ſupport their opinion, there muſt be no beginning, but free acts of Will muſt have been choſen by foregoing free acts of Will in the ſoul of every man, without beginning; and ſo before he had a being, from all eternity.

Section VI.

Concerning the Will's determining in Things which are perfectly indifferent *in the View of the Mind.*

A great argument for ſelf-determining power, is the ſuppoſed experience we univerſally have of an ability to determine our Wills, in caſes wherein no prevailing motive is preſented: the Will (as is ſuppoſed) has its choice to make between two or more things, that are perfectly equal in the view of the mind; and the Will is apparently altogether indifferent; and yet we find no difficulty in coming to a choice; the Will can inſtantly determine itſelf to one, by a ſovereign power which it has over itſelf, without being moved by any preponderating inducement.

Thus the fore-mentioned author of an *Eſſay on the Freedom of the Will*, &c. p. 25, 26, 27, ſuppoſes, "That there are many inſtances, wherein the Will is "determined neither by preſent uneaſineſs, nor by "the greateſt apparent good, nor by the laſt dic-"tate of the underſtanding, nor by any thing "elſe, but merely by itſelf as a ſovereign, ſelf-deter-"mining power of the ſoul; and that the ſoul does "not will this or that action, in ſome caſes, by any "other influence but becauſe it will. Thus (ſays "he) I can turn my face to the South, or the North; "I can point with my finger upward, or downward. "And thus, in ſome caſes, the Will determines itſelf "in a very ſovereign manner, becauſe it will, with-"out a reaſon borrowed from the underſtanding: "and hereby it diſcovers its own perfect power of "choice, riſing from within itſelf, and free from all "influence or reſtraint of any kind." And in pages 66, 70, and 73, 74, this author very expreſsly ſuppoſes the Will in many caſes to be determined by

no motive at all, and acts altogether without motive, or ground of preference.—Here I would obſerve,

1. The very ſuppoſition which is here made, directly contradicts and overthrows itſelf. For the thing ſuppoſed, wherein this grand argument conſiſts, is, that among ſeveral things the Will actually chooſes one before another, at the ſame that it is perfectly indifferent; which is the very ſame thing as to ſay, the mind has a preference, at the ſame time that it has no preference. What is meant cannot be, that the mind is indifferent before it comes to have a choice, or until it has a preference; or, which is the ſame thing, that the mind is indifferent until it comes to be not indifferent: For certainly this author did not ſuppoſe he had a controverſy with any perſon in ſuppoſing this. And then it is nothing to his purpoſe, that the mind which chooſes, was indifferent once; unleſs it chooſes remaining indifferent; for otherwiſe, it does not chooſe at all in that caſe of indifference, concerning which is all the queſtion. Beſides, it appears in fact, that the thing which this author ſuppoſes, is not that the Will chooſes one thing before another, concerning which it is indifferent *before it chooſes*; but alſo is indifferent *when* it *chooſes*; and that its being otherwiſe than indifferent is not until afterwards, in conſequence of its choice; that the choſen thing's appearing preferable and more agreeable than another, ariſes from its choice already made. His words are, (p. 30,) "Where "the objects which are propoſed, appear equally fit "or good, the Will is left without a guide or direc- "tor; and therefore muſt take its own choice by "its own determination; it being properly a ſelf- "determining power. And in ſuch caſes the Will "does as it were make a good to itſelf by its own "choice, *i. e.* creates its own pleaſure or delight in "this ſelf-choſen good. Even as a man by ſeizing

" upon a ſpot of unoccupied land, in an uninhabit-
" ed country, makes it his own poſſeſſion and prop-
" erty, and as ſuch rejoices in it. Where things
" were indifferent before, the Will finds nothing to
" make them more agreeable, conſidered merely in
" themſelves; but the pleaſure it feels ARISING
" FROM ITS OWN CHOICE, and its perſever-
" ance therein. We love many things we have
" choſen, AND PURELY BECAUSE WE CHOSE
" THEM."

This is as much as to ſay, that we firſt begin to prefer many things, now ceaſing any longer to be indifferent with reſpect to them, purely becauſe we have preferred and choſen them before. Theſe things muſt needs be ſpoken inconſiderately by this author. Choice or preference cannot be before itſelf in the ſame inſtance, either in the order of time or nature: It cannot be the foundation of itſelf, or the fruit or conſequence of itſelf. The very act of chooſing one thing *rather than another*, is *preferring* that thing, and that is ſetting a higher value on that thing. But that the mind ſets an higher value on one thing than another, is not, in the firſt place, the fruit of its ſetting a higher value on that thing.

This author ſays, p. 36, "The Will may be per-
" fectly indifferent, and yet the Will may determine
" itſelf to chooſe one or the other." And again, in the ſame page, " I am entirely indifferent to either;
" and yet my Will may determine itſelf to chooſe."
And again, " Which I ſhall chooſe muſt be deter-
" mined by the mere act of my Will." If the choice is determined by a mere act of Will, then the choice is determined by a mere act of choice. And concerning this matter, *viz.* That the act of the Will itſelf is determined by an act of choice, this writer is expreſs, in page 72. Speaking of the caſe, where there is no ſuperior fitneſs in objects preſented, he

has these words: "There it must act by its own "CHOICE, and determine itself as it PLEASES." Where it is supposed that the very *determination*, which is the ground and spring of the Will's act, is an act of *choice* and *pleasure*, wherein one act is more agreeable. and the mind better pleased in it than another; and this *preference* and *superior pleasedness* is the ground of all it does in the case. And if so, the mind is not indifferent when it determines itself, but *had rather* do one thing than another, had rather determine itself one way than another. And therefore the Will does not act at all in indifference; not so much as in the first step it takes, or the first rise and beginning of its acting. If it be possible for the understanding to act in indifference, yet to be sure the Will never does; because the Will's beginning to act is the very same thing as its beginning to choose or prefer. And if in the very first act of the Will, the mind prefers something, then the idea of that thing preferred, does at that time preponderate, or prevail in the mind: or, which is the same thing, the idea of it has a prevailing influence on the Will. So that this wholly destroys the thing supposed, *viz.* That the mind can by a sovereign power choose one of two or more things, which in the view of the mind are, in every respect, perfectly equal, one of which does not at all preponderate, nor has any prevailing influence on the mind above another.

So that this author, in his grand argument for the ability of the Will to choose one of two or more things, concerning which it is perfectly indifferent, does at the same time, in effect, deny the thing he supposes, and allows and asserts the point he endeavours to overthrow; even that the Will, in choosing, is subject to no prevailing influence of the idea, or view of the thing chosen. And indeed it is impossible to offer this argument without overthrowing

it; the thing ſuppoſed in it being inconſiſtent with itſelf, and that which denies itſelf. To ſuppoſe the Will to act at all in a ſtate of perfect indifference, either to determine itſelf, or to do any thing elſe, is to aſſert that the mind chooſes without chooſing. To ſay that when it is indifferent, it can do as it pleaſes, is to ſay that it can follow its pleaſure when it has no pleaſure to follow. And therefore if there be any difficulty in the inſtances of two cakes, two eggs, &c. which are exactly alike, one as good as another; concerning which this author ſuppoſes the mind in fact has a *choice*, and ſo in effect ſuppoſes that it has a *preference*; it as much concerned himſelf to ſolve the difficulty, as it does thoſe whom he oppoſes. For if theſe inſtances prove any thing to his purpoſe, they prove that a man chooſes without choice. And yet this is not to his purpoſe; becauſe if this is what he aſſerts, his own words are as much againſt him, and do as much contradict him, as the words of thoſe he diſputes againſt can do.

2. There is no great difficulty in ſhewing, in ſuch inſtances as are alledged, not only *that it muſt needs be ſo*, that the mind muſt be influenced in its choice, by ſomething that has a preponderating influence upon it, but alſo *how it is ſo*. A little attention to our own experience, and a diſtinct conſideration of the acts of our own minds, in ſuch caſes, will be ſufficient to clear up the matter.

Thus, ſuppoſing I have a cheſs-board before me; and becauſe I am required by a ſuperior, or deſired by a friend, or to make ſome experiment concerning my own ability and liberty, or on ſome other conſideration, I am determined to touch ſome one of the ſpots or ſquares on the board with my finger; not being limited or directed in the firſt propoſal, or my own firſt purpoſe, which is general, to any one in particular; and there being nothing in the ſquares,

in themſelves conſidered, that recommends any one of all the ſixty-four, more than another: in this caſe, my mind determines to give itſelf up to what is vulgarly called *accident*,* by determining to touch that ſquare which happens to be moſt in view, which my eye is eſpecially upon at that moment, or which happens to be then moſt in my mind, or which I ſhall be directed to by ſome other ſuch-like accident.—Here are ſeveral ſteps of the mind's proceeding (tho' all may be done as it were in a moment) the *firſt* ſtep is its *general* determination that it will touch one of the ſquares. The *next* ſtep is another *general* determination to give itſelf up to accident, in ſome certain way; as to touch that which ſhall be moſt in the eye or mind at that time, or to ſome other ſuch-like accident. The *third* and laſt ſtep is a *particular* determination to touch a certain individual ſpot, even that ſquare, which, by that ſort of accident the mind has pitched upon, has actually offered itſelf beyond others. Now it is apparent that in none of theſe ſeveral ſteps does the mind proceed in abſolute indifference, but in each of them is influenced by a preponderating inducement. So it is in the *firſt* ſtep; the mind's general determination to touch one of the ſixty-four ſpots: the mind is not abſolutely indifferent whether it does ſo or no; it is induced to it, for the ſake of making ſome experiment, or by the deſire of a friend, or ſome other motive that prevails. So it is in the *ſecond* ſtep, the mind's determining to give itſelf up to accident, by touching that which ſhall be moſt in the eye, or the idea of

* I have elſewhere obſerved what that is which is vulgarly called *accident;* that it is nothing akin to the *Arminian* metaphyſical notion of *contingence*, ſomething not connected with any thing foregoing; but that it is ſomething that comes to paſs in the courſe of things, in ſome affair that men are concerned in, unforeſeen, and not owing to their deſign.

which ſhall be moſt prevalent in the mind, &c. The mind is not abſolutely indifferent whether it proceeds by this rule or no; but chooſes it becauſe it appears at that time a convenient and requiſite expedient in order to fulfil the general purpoſe aforeſaid. And ſo it is in the *third* and laſt ſtep, it is determining to touch that individual ſpot which actually does prevail in the mind's view. The mind is not indifferent concerning this; but is influenced by a prevailing inducement and reaſon; which is, that this is a proſecution of the preceding determination, which appeared requiſite, and was fixed before in the ſecond ſtep.

Accident will ever ſerve a man, without hindering him a moment, in ſuch a caſe. It will always be ſo among a number of objects in view, one will prevail in the eye, or in idea beyond others. When we have our eyes open in the clear ſun-ſhine, many objects ſtrike the eye at once, and innumerable images may be at once painted in it by the rays of light; but the attention of the mind is not equal to ſeveral of them at once; or if it be, it does not continue ſo for any time. And ſo it is with reſpect to the ideas of the mind in general: ſeveral ideas are not in equal ſtrength in the mind's view and notice at once; or at leaſt, does not remain ſo for any ſenſible continuance. There is nothing in the world more conſtantly varying, than the ideas of the mind: they do not remain preciſely in the ſame ſtate for the leaſt perceivable ſpace of time: as is evident by this, that all perceivable time is judged and perceived by the mind only by the ſucceſſion or the ſucceſſive changes of its own ideas: Therefore while the views or perceptions of the mind remain preciſely in the ſame ſtate, there is no perceivable ſpace or length of time, becauſe no ſenſible ſucceſſion at all.

As the acts of the Will, in each ſtep of the fore

mentioned procedure, does not come to pafs without a particular cauſe, every act is owing to a prevailing inducement: ſo the accident, as I have called it, or that which happens in the unſearchable courſe of things, to which the mind yields itſelf, and by which it is guided, is not any thing that comes to paſs without a cauſe; and the mind in determining to be guided by it, is not determined by ſomething that has no cauſe; any more than if it determined to be guided by a lot, or the caſting of a die. For though the die's falling in ſuch a manner be accidental to him that caſts it, yet none will ſuppoſe that there is no cauſe why it falls as it does. The involuntary changes in the ſucceſſion of our ideas, though the cauſes may not be obſerved, have as much a cauſe, as the changeable motions of the motes that float in the air, or the continual infinitely various, ſucceſſive changes of the unevenneſſes on the ſurface of the water.

There are two things eſpecially, which are probably the occaſions of confuſion in the minds of them who inſiſt upon it, that the Will acts in a proper indifference, and without being moved by any inducement, in its determination in ſuch caſes as have been mentioned.

1. They ſeem to miſtake the point in queſtion, or at leaſt not to keep it diſtinctly in view. The queſtion they diſpute about, is, Whether the mind be indifferent about the *objects* preſented, one of which is to be taken, touched, pointed to, &c. as two eggs, two cakes, which appear equally good. Whereas the queſtion to be conſidered, is, Whether the perſon be indifferent with reſpect to his own *actions*; whether he does not, on ſome conſideration or other, prefer one act with reſpect to theſe objects before another. The mind in its determination and choice, in theſe caſes, is not moſt immediately and directly

converſant about the *objects preſented;* but *the acts to be done* concerning theſe objects. The objects may appear equal, and the mind may never properly make any choice between them: but the next act of the Will being about the external actions to be performed, taking, touching, &c. theſe may not appear equal, and one action may properly be choſen before another. In each ſtep of the mind's progreſs, the determination is not about the objects, unleſs indirectly and improperly, but about the actions, which it chooſes for other reaſons than any preference of the objects, and for reaſons not taken at all from the objects.

There is no neceſſity of ſuppoſing, that the mind does ever at all properly chooſe one of the objects before another; either before it has taken, or afterwards. Indeed the man chooſes to *take* or *touch* one rather than another; but not becauſe it chooſes the *thing taken*, or *touched;* but from foreign conſiderations. The caſe may be ſo, that of two things offered, a man may, for certain reaſons, chooſe and prefer the taking of that which he *undervalues*, and chooſe to neglect to take that which his mind *prefers*. In ſuch a caſe, chooſing the thing taken, and chooſing to take, are diverſe: and ſo they are in a caſe where the things preſented are equal in the mind's eſteem, and neither of them preferred. All that fact and experience makes evident, is, that the mind chooſes one action rather than another. And therefore the arguments which they bring, in order to be to their purpoſe, ought to be to prove that the mind chooſes the action in perfect indifference, with reſpect to *that action;* and not to prove that the mind chooſes the action in perfect indifference with reſpect to the *object;* which is very poſſible, and yet the Will not act at all without prevalent inducement, and proper preponderation.

2. Another reaſon of confuſion and difficulty in this matter, ſeems to be, not diſtinguiſhing between a *general* indifference, or an indifference with reſpect to what is to be done in a more diſtant and general view of it, and a *particular* indifference, or an indifference with reſpect to the next immediate act, viewed with its particular and preſent circumſtances. A man may be perfectly indifferent with reſpect to his own *actions*, in the former reſpect; and yet not in the latter. Thus, in the foregoing inſtance of touching one of the ſquares of a cheſs-board; when it is firſt propoſed that I ſhould touch one of them, I may be perfectly indifferent which I touch; becauſe as yet I view the matter remotely and generally, being but in the firſt ſtep of the mind's progreſs in the affair. But yet, when I am actually come to the laſt ſtep, and the very next thing to be determined is which is to be touched, having already determined that I will touch that which happens to be moſt in my eye or mind, and my mind being now fixed on a particular one, the act of touching that, conſidered thus immediately, and in theſe particular preſent circumſtances, is not what my mind is abſolutely indifferent about.

Section VII.

Concerning the notion of Liberty of Will, *conſiſting in* Indifference.

What has been ſaid in the foregoing ſection, has a tendency in ſome meaſure to evince the abſurdity of the opinion of ſuch as place Liberty in Indifference, or in that equilibrium whereby the Will is without all antecedent determination or bias, and

left hitherto free from any prepoſſeſſing inclination to one ſide or the other; that the determination of the Will to either ſide may be entirely from itſelf, and that it may be owing only to its own power, and that ſovereignty which it has over itſelf, that it goes this way rather than that.*

But in as much as this has been of ſuch long ſtanding, and has been ſo generally received, and ſo much inſiſted on by *Pelagians*, *Semi-Pelagians*, *Jeſuits*, *Socinians*, *Arminians*, and others, it may deſerve a more full conſideration. And therefore I ſhall now proceed to a more particular and thorough enquiry into this notion.

Now, leſt ſome ſhould ſuppoſe that I do not underſtand thoſe that place Liberty in Indifference, or ſhould charge me with miſrepreſenting their opinion, I would ſignify, that I am ſenſible, there are

* Dr. Whitby, and ſome other *Arminians*, make a diſtinction of different kinds of freedom; one of God, and perfect ſpirits above; another of perſons in a ſtate of trial. The former Dr. Whitby allows to conſiſt with neceſſity; the latter he holds to be without neceſſity: and this latter he ſuppoſes to be requiſite to our being the ſubjects of praiſe or diſpraiſe, rewards or puniſhments, precepts and prohibitions, promiſes and threats, exhortations and dehortations, and a covenant-treaty. And to this freedom he ſuppoſes *Indifference* to be requiſite. In his Diſcourſe on the five points, p. 299, 300, he ſays, "It is a freedom (ſpeaking of a freedom not only "from co-action, but from neceſſity) requiſite, as we conceive, "to render us capable of trial or probation, and to render our "actions worthy of praiſe or diſpraiſe, and our perſons of re-"wards or puniſhments." And in the next page, ſpeaking of the ſame matter, he ſays, "Excellent to this purpoſe, are "the words of Mr. Thorndike: *We ſay not that Indifference* "*is requiſite to all freedom, but to the freedom of a man alone* "*in this ſtate of travail and proficience: the ground of which* "*is God's tender of a treaty, and conditions of peace and re-*"*concilement to fallen man, together with thoſe precepts and* "*prohibitions, thoſe promiſes and threats, thoſe exhortations* "*and dehortations, it is enforced with.*"

ſome, who, when they talk of the Liberty of the Will as conſiſting in Indifference, expreſs themſelves as though they would not be underſtood of the Indifference of the inclination or tendency of the Will, but of, I know not what, Indifference of the ſoul's power of willing; or that the Will, with reſpect to its power or ability to chooſe, is indifferent, can go either way indifferently, either to the right hand or left, either act or forbear to act, one as well as the other. Though this ſeems to be a refining only of ſome particular writers, and newly invented, and which will by no means conſiſt with the manner of expreſſion uſed by the defenders of Liberty of Indifference in general. And I wiſh ſuch refiners would thoroughly conſider, whether they diſtinctly know their own meaning, when they make a diſtinction between Indifference of the ſoul as to its *power* or *ability* of willing or chooſing, and the ſoul's Indifference as to the preference or choice itſelf; and whether they do not deceive themſelves in imagining that they have any diſtinct meaning at all. The Indifference of the ſoul as to its ability or power to Will, muſt be the ſame thing as the Indifference of the ſtate of the power or faculty of the Will, or the indifference of the ſtate which the ſoul itſelf, which has that power or faculty, hitherto remains in, as to the exerciſe of that power, in the choice it ſhall by and by make.

But not to inſiſt any longer on the obſtruſeneſs and inexplicableneſs of this diſtinction; let what will be ſuppoſed concerning the meaning of them that make uſe of it, thus much muſt at leaſt be intended by *Arminians* when they talk of Indifference as eſſential to Liberty of Will, if they intend any thing, in any reſpect to their purpoſe, *viz.* That it is ſuch an Indifference as leaves the Will not determined already; but free from actual poſſeſſion, and vacant of

predetermination, so far, that there may be room for the exercise of the *self-determining power* of the Will; and that the Will's freedom consists in, or depends upon this vacancy and opportunity that is left for the Will itself to be the determiner of the act that is to be the free act.

And here I would observe in the *first* place, that to make out this scheme of Liberty, the Indifference must be *perfect* and *absolute;* there must be a perfect freedom from all antecedent preponderation or inclination. Because if the Will be already inclined, before it exerts its own sovereign power on itself, then its inclination is not wholly owing to itself: if when two opposites are proposed to the soul for its choice, the proposal does not find the soul wholly in a state of Indifference, then it is not found in a state of Liberty for mere self-determination.—The least degree of an antecedent bias must be inconsistent with their notion of Liberty. For so long as prior inclination possesses the Will, and is not removed, it binds the Will, so that it is utterly impossible that the Will should act otherwise than agreeably to it. Surely the Will cannot act or choose contrary to a remaining prevailing inclination of the Will. To suppose otherwise, would be the same thing as to suppose, that the Will is *inclined* contrary to its present prevailing *inclination*, or contrary to what it is *inclined* to. That which the Will chooses and prefers, that, all things considered, it preponderates and inclines to. It is equally impossible for the Will to choose contrary to its own remaining and present preponderating inclination, as it is to *prefer* contrary to its own present *preference*, or *choose* contrary to its own present *choice*. The Will, therefore, so long as it is under the influence of an old preponderating inclination, is not at Liberty for a new free act, or any act that shall now be an act of

ſelf-determination. The act which is a ſelf-determined free act, muſt be an act which the Will determines in the poſſeſſion and uſe of ſuch a Liberty, as conſiſts in a freedom from every thing, which, if it were there, would make it impoſſible that the Will, at that time, ſhould be otherwiſe than that way to which it tends.

If any one ſhould ſay, there is no need that the Indifference ſhould be perfect; but although a former inclination and preference ſtill remains, yet, if it be not very ſtrong and violent, poſſibly the ſtrength of the Will may oppoſe and overcome it:—This is groſsly abſurd; for the ſtrength of the Will, let it be never ſo great, does not at all enable it to act one way, and not the contrary way, both at the ſame time. It gives it no ſuch ſovereignty and command, as to cauſe itſelf to prefer and not to prefer at the ſame time, or to chooſe contrary to its own preſent choice.

Therefore, if there be the leaſt degree of antecedent preponderation of the Will, it muſt be perfectly aboliſhed, before the Will can be at liberty to determine itſelf the contrary way. And if the Will determines itſelf the ſame way, it was not a *free determination*, becauſe the Will is not wholly at Liberty in ſo doing: its determination is not altogether *from itſelf*, but it was partly determined before, in its prior inclination: and all the freedom the Will exerciſes in the caſe, is in an increaſe of inclination, which it gives itſelf, over and above what it had by foregoing bias; ſo much is from itſelf, and ſo much is from perfect Indifference. For though the Will had a previous tendency that way, yet as to that additional degree of inclination, it had no tendency. Therefore the previous tendency is of no conſideration, with reſpect to the act wherein the Will is free. So that it comes to the ſame thing which was ſaid at firſt,

that as to the act of the Will, wherein the Will is free, there must be *perfect Indifference*, or *equilibrium*.

To illustrate this; if we should suppose a sovereign self-moving power in a natural body: but that the body is in motion already, by an antecedent bias; for instance, gravitation towards the centre of the earth: and has one degree of motion already, by virtue of that previous tendency; but by its self-moving power it adds one degree more to its motion, and moves so much more swiftly towards the centre of the earth than it would do by its gravity only: it is evident, that all that is owing to a self-moving power in this case, is the additional degree of motion; and that the other degree of motion which it had from gravity, is of no consideration in the case, does not help the effect of the free self-moving power in the least; the effect is just the same, as if the body had received from itself one degree of motion from a state of perfect rest. So if we should suppose a self-moving power given to the scale of a balance, which has a weight of one degree beyond the opposite scale; and we ascribe to it an ability to add to itself another degree of force the same way, by its self-moving power; this is just the same thing as to ascribe to it a power to give itself one degree of preponderation from a perfect equilibrium; and so much power as the scale has to give itself an overbalance from a perfect equipoise, so much self-moving self-preponderating power it has, and no more. So that its free power this way is always to be measured from perfect equilibrium.

I need say no more to prove, that if Indifference be essential to Liberty, it must be perfect Indifference: and that so far as the Will is destitute of this, so far it is destitute of that freedom by which it is its own master, and in a capacity of being its own determiner, without being at all passive, or subject to

the power and ſway of ſomething elſe, in its motions and determinations.

Having obſerved theſe things, let us now try whether this notion of the Liberty of Will conſiſting in Indifference and equilibrium, and the Will's ſelf-determination in ſuch a ſtate be not abſurd and inconſiſtent.

And here I would lay down this as an axiom of undoubted truth; *that every free act is done in a ſtate of freedom, and not only after ſuch a ſtate.* If an act of the Will be an act wherein the ſoul is free, it muſt be exerted in a *ſtate of freedom*, and in the *time of freedom*. It will not ſuffice, that the act immediately follows a ſtate of Liberty; but Liberty muſt yet continue, and co-exiſt with the act; the ſoul remaining in poſſeſſion of Liberty. Becauſe that is the notion of a free act of the ſoul, even an act wherein the ſoul *uſes* or *exerciſes Liberty*. But if the ſoul is not, in the very time of the act, in the *poſſeſſion* of Liberty, it cannot at that time be in the *uſe* of it.

Now the queſtion is, whether ever the ſoul of man puts forth an act of Will, while it yet remains in a ſtate of Liberty, in that notion of a ſtate of Liberty, *viz.* as implying a ſtate of Indifference, or whether the ſoul ever exerts an act of choice or preference, while at that very time the Will is in a perfect equilibrium, not inclining one way more than another. The very putting of the queſtion is ſufficient to ſhew the abſurdity of the affirmative anſwer: for how ridiculous would it be for any body to inſiſt, that that the ſoul chooſes one thing before another, when at the very ſame inſtant it is perfectly indifferent with reſpect to each! This is the ſame thing as to ſay, the ſoul prefers one thing to another, at the very ſame time that it has no preference. Choice and preference can no more be in a ſtate of Indifference,

than motion can be in a ſtate of reſt, or than the preponderation of the ſcale of a balance can be in a ſtate of equilibrium. Motion may be the next moment after reſt; but cannot co-exiſt with it, in *any*, even the *leaſt* part of it. So choice may be immediately after a ſtate of Indifference, but has no co-exiſtence with it: even the very beginning of it is not in a ſtate of Indifference. And therefore if this be Liberty, no act of the Will, in any degree, is ever performed in a ſtate of Liberty, or in the time of Liberty. Volition and Liberty are ſo far from agreeing together, and being eſſential one to another, that they are contrary one to another, and one excludes and deſtroys the other, as much as motion and reſt, light and darkneſs, or life and death. So that the Will acts not at all, does not ſo much as begin to act in the time of ſuch Liberty: freedom is perfectly at an end, and has ceaſed to be, at the firſt moment of action; and therefore Liberty cannot reach the action, to affect, or qualify it, or give it a denomination, or any part of it, any more than if it had ceaſed to be twenty years before the action began. The moment that Liberty ceaſes to be, it ceaſes to be a qualification of any thing. If light and darkneſs ſucceed one another inſtantaneouſly, light qualifies nothing after it is gone out, to make any thing lightſome or bright, any more at the firſt moment of perfect darkneſs, than months or years after. Life denominates nothing *vital* at the firſt moment of perfect death. So freedom, if it conſiſts in, or implies Indifference, can denominate nothing free, at the firſt moment of preference or preponderation. Therefore it is manifeſt, that no Liberty which the ſoul is poſſeſſed of, or ever uſes, in any of its acts of volition, conſiſts in Indifference; and that the opinion of ſuch as ſuppoſe, that Indifference be-

longs to the very eſſence of Liberty, is to the higheſt degree abſurd and contradictory.

If any one ſhould imagine, that this manner of arguing is nothing but a trick and deluſion ; and to evade the reaſoning, ſhould ſay, that the thing wherein the Will exerciſes its Liberty, is not in the act of choice or preponderation itſelf, but in *determining* itſelf to a certain choice or preference ; that the act of the Will wherein it is free, and uſes its own ſovereignty, conſiſts in its *cauſing* or *determining* the *change* or *tranſition* from a ſtate of Indifference to a certain preference, or determining to give a certain turn to the balance, which has hitherto been even ; and that this act the Will exerts in a ſtate of Liberty, or while the Will yet remains in equilibrium, and perfect maſter of itſelf.—I ſay, if any one chooſes to expreſs his notion of Liberty after this, or ſome ſuch manner, let us ſee if he can make out his matters any better than before.

What is aſſerted is, that the Will, while it yet remains in perfect equilibrium, without preference, determines to change itſelf from that ſtate, and excite in itſelf a certain choice or preference. Now let us ſee whether this does not come to the ſame abſurdity we had before. If it be ſo, that the Will, while it yet remains perfectly indifferent, determines to put itſelf out of that ſtate, and give itſelf a certain preponderation ; then I would inquire, whether the ſoul does not determine this of choice ; or whether the Will's coming to a determination to do ſo, be not the ſame thing as the ſoul's coming to a choice to do ſo. If the ſoul does not determine this of choice, or in the exerciſe of choice, then it does not determine it voluntarily. And if the ſoul does not determine it votuntarily, or of its own *Will*, then in what ſenſe does its *Will* determine it ? And if the Will does not determine it, then how is the *Liberty*

of the Will exerciſed in the determination? What ſort of Liberty is exerciſed by the ſoul in thoſe determinations, wherein there is no exerciſe of choice, which are not voluntary, and wherein the Will is not concerned?—But if it be allowed, that this determination is an act of choice, and it be inſiſted on, that the ſoul, while it yet remains in a ſtate of perfect Indifference, chooſes to put itſelf out of that ſtate, and to turn itſelf one way; then the ſoul is already come to a choice, and chooſes that way. And ſo we have the very ſame abſurdity which we had before. Here is the ſoul in a ſtate of choice, and in a ſtate of equilibrium, both at the ſame time: the ſoul already chooſing one way, while it remains in a ſtate of perfect Indifference, and has no choice of one way more than the other.—And indeed this manner of talking, though it may a little hide the abſurdity in the obſcurity of expreſſion, is more nonſenſical, and increaſes the inconſiſtence. To ſay, the free act of the Will, or the act which the Will exerts in a ſtate of freedom and Indifference, does not imply preference in it, but is what the Will does in order to cauſing or producing a preference, is as much as to ſay, the ſoul chooſes (for to will and to chooſe are the ſame thing) without choice, and prefers without preference, in order to cauſe or produce the beginning of a preference, or the firſt choice. And that is, that the firſt choice is exerted without choice, in order to produce itſelf.

If any, to evade theſe things, ſhould own, that a ſtate of Liberty, and a ſtate of Indifference are not the ſame, and that the former may be without the latter; but ſhould ſay, that Indifference is ſtill *eſſential to* the freedom of an act of Will, in ſome ſort, namely, as it is neceſſary to go immediately *before it*: it being eſſential to the freedom of an act of Will that it ſhould directly and immediately *ariſe*

out of a ſtate of Indifference: ſtill this will not help the cauſe of *Arminian* Liberty, or make it conſiſtent with itſelf. For if the act ſprings immediately out of a ſtate of Indifference, then it does not ariſe from *antecedent* choice or preference. But if the act ariſes directly out of a ſtate of Indifference, without any intervening choice to chooſe and determine it, then the act not being determined by choice, is not determined by the Will; the mind exerciſes no free choice in the affair, and free choice and free Will have no hand in the determination of the act. Which is entirely inconſiſtent with their notion of the freedom of Volition.

If any ſhould ſuppoſe, that theſe difficulties and abſurdities may be avoided, by ſaying, that the Liberty of the mind conſiſts in a power to *ſuſpend* the act of the Will, and ſo to keep it in a ſtate of *Indifference*, until there has been opportunity for conſideration; and ſo ſhall ſay, that however Indifference is not eſſential to Liberty in ſuch a manner, that the mind muſt make its choice in a ſtate of Indifference, which is an inconſiſtency, or that the act of Will muſt ſpring immediately out of Indifference; yet indifference may be eſſential to the Liberty of acts of the Will in this reſpect, *viz.* That Liberty conſiſts in a Power of the mind to forbear or ſuſpend the act of Volition, and keep the mind in a ſtate of Indifference for the preſent, until there has been opportunity for proper deliberation: I ſay, if any one imagines that this helps the matter, it is a great miſtake: it reconciles no inconſiſtency, and relieves no difficulty which the affair is attended with.—For here the following things muſt be obſerved:

1. That this *ſuſpending* of Volition, if there be properly any ſuch thing, is itſelf an act of Volition. If the mind determines to ſuſpend its act,

it determines it voluntarily ; it chooſes, on ſome conſideration, to ſuſpend it. And this choice or determination, is an act of the Will : And indeed it is ſuppoſed to be ſo in the very hypotheſis ; for it is ſuppoſed that the Liberty *of the Will* conſiſts in its Power to do this, and that its doing it is the very thing wherein *the Will exerciſes its Liberty.* But how can the Will exerciſe Liberty in it, if it be not an act of the Will ? The Liberty of the Will is not exerciſed in any thing but what the Will does.

2. This determining to ſuſpend acting is not only an act of the Will, but it is ſuppoſed to be the only free act of the Will ; becauſe it is ſaid, that *this is the thing wherein the Liberty of the Will conſiſts.* —Now if this be ſo, then this is all the act of will that we have to conſider in this controverſy, about the Liberty of Will, and in our enquiries, wherein the Liberty of man conſiſts. And now the forementioned difficulties remain : the former queſtion returns upon us, *viz.* Wherein conſiſts the freedom of the Will *in thoſe acts* wherein it is free ? And if this act of determining a ſuſpenſion be the only act in which the Will is free, then wherein conſiſts the Will's freedom with reſpect to this act of ſuſpenſion ? And how is Indifference eſſential to this act ? The anſwer muſt be, according to what is ſuppoſed in the evaſion under conſideration, that the Liberty of the Will in this act of ſuſpenſion, conſiſts in a Power to ſuſpend even this act, until there has been opportunity for thorough deliberation. But this will be to plunge directly into the groſſeſt nonſenſe : for it is the act of ſuſpenſion itſelf that we are ſpeaking of ; and there is no room for a ſpace of deliberation and ſuſpenſion in order to determine whether we will ſuſpend or no. For that ſuppoſes, that even ſuſpenſion itſelf may be deferred : which is abſurd ; for the very deferring

the determination of ſuſpenſion to conſider whether we will ſuſpend or no, will be actually ſuſpending. For during the ſpace of ſuſpenſion, to conſider, whether to ſuſpend, the act is *ipſo facto* ſuſpended. There is no medium between ſuſpending to act, and immediately acting; and therefore no poſſibility of avoiding either the one or the other one moment.

And beſides, this is attended with ridiculous abſurdity another way: for now it is come to that, that Liberty conſiſts wholly in the mind's having Power to ſuſpend its determination whether to ſuſpend or no; that there may be time for conſideration, whether it be beſt to ſuſpend. And if Liberty conſiſts in this only, then this is the Liberty under conſideration: we have to enquire now, how Liberty with reſpect to this act of ſuſpending a determination of ſuſpenſion, conſiſts in Indifference, or how Indifference is eſſential to it. The anſwer, according to the hypotheſis we are upon, muſt be, that it conſiſts in a Power of ſuſpending even this laſt mentioned act, to have time to conſider whether to ſuſpend that. And then the ſame difficulties and enquires return over again with reſpect to that; and ſo on for ever. Which, if it would ſhew any thing, would ſhew only that there is no ſuch thing as a free act. It drives the exerciſe of freedom back *in infinitum;* and that is to drive it out of the world.

And beſides all this, there is a deluſion, and a latent groſs contradiction in the affair another way; in as much as in explaining how, or in what reſpect the Will is free with regard to a particular act of Volition, it is ſaid that its Liberty conſiſts in a Power to determine to ſuſpend *that act*, which places Liberty not in *that act* of Volition which the enquiry is about, but altogether in another antecedent

act. Which contradicts the thing ſuppoſed in both the queſtion and anſwer. The queſtion is, wherein conſiſts the mind's Liberty *in any particular act* of Volition? And the anſwer, in pretending to ſhew wherein lies the mind's Liberty *in that act*, in effect ſays, it does not lie in that act at all, but in another, *viz.* a Volition *to ſuſpend that act*. And therefore the anſwer is both contradictory, and altogether impertinent and beſide the purpoſe. For it does not ſhew wherein the Liberty of the Will conſiſts in the act in queſtion; inſtead of that, it ſuppoſes it does not conſiſt in that act at all, but in another diſtinct from it, even a Volition to ſuſpend that act, and take time to conſider of it. And no account is pretended to be given wherein the mind is free with reſpect to that act, wherein this anſwer ſuppoſes the Liberty of the mind indeed conſiſts, *viz.* the act of ſuſpenſion, or of determining the ſuſpenſion.

On the whole, it is exceeding manifeſt, that the Liberty of the mind does not conſiſt in Indifference, and that Indifference is not eſſential or neceſſary to it, or at all belonging to it, as the *Arminians* ſuppoſe; that opinion being full of nothing but abſurdity and ſelf-contradiction.

Section VIII.

Concerning the ſuppoſed Liberty of the Will, as oppoſite to all Neceſſity.

It is a thing chiefly inſiſted on by *Arminians*, in this controverſy, as a thing moſt important and eſſential in human Liberty, that volitions, or the acts of the Will, are *contingent* events; underſtanding contingence as oppoſite, not only to conſtraint, but

to all Neceſſity. Therefore I would particularly conſider this matter. And

1. I would enquire, whether there is, or can be any ſuch thing, as a volition which is contingent in ſuch a ſenſe, as not only to come to paſs without any Neceſſity of conſtraint or co-action, but alſo without a *Neceſſity of conſequence*, or an infallible connexion with any thing foregoing.

2. Whether, if it were ſo, this would at all help the cauſe of Liberty.

I. I would conſider whether volition is a thing that ever does, or can come to paſs, in this manner, contingently.

And here it muſt be remembered, that it has been already ſhewn, that nothing can never come to paſs without a cauſe, or reaſon why it exiſts in this manner rather than another; and the evidence of this has been particularly applied to the acts of the Will. Now if this be ſo, it will demonſtrably follow, that the acts of the Will are never contingent, or without neceſſity in the ſenſe ſpoken of; in as much as thoſe things which have a cauſe, or reaſon of their exiſtence, muſt be connected with their cauſe. This appears by the following conſiderations.

1. For an event to have a cauſe and ground of its exiſtence, and yet not be connected with its cauſe, is an inconſiſtence. For if the event be not connected with the cauſe, it is not dependent on the cauſe; its exiſtence is as it were looſe from its influence, and may attend it or may not; it being a mere contingence, whether it follows or attends the influence of the cauſe, or not: And that is the ſame thing as not to be dependent on it. And to ſay the event is not dependent on its cauſe is abſurd: It is the ſame thing as to ſay, it is not its cauſe, nor the event the effect of it: For dependence on the influence of a cauſe is the very notion of an effect.

If there be no ſuch relation between one thing and another, conſiſting in the connexion and dependence of one thing on the influence of another, then it is certain there is no ſuch relation between them as is ſignified by the terms *cauſe* and *effect*. So far as an event is dependent on a cauſe and connected with it, ſo much cauſality is there in the caſe, and no more. The cauſe does, or brings to paſs no more in any event, than is dependent on it. If we ſay, the connexion and dependence is not total, but partial, and that the effect, though it has ſome connexion and dependence, yet is not entirely dependent on it; that is the ſame thing as to ſay, that not all that is in the event is an effect of that cauſe, but that only a part of it ariſes from thence, and part ſome other way.

2. If there are ſome events which are not neceſſarily connected with their cauſes, then it will follow, that there are ſome things which come to paſs without any cauſe, contrary to the ſuppoſition. For if there be any event which was not neceſſarily connected with the influence of the cauſe under ſuch circumſtances, then it was contingent whether it would attend or follow the influence of the cauſe, or no; it might have followed, and it might not, when the cauſe was the ſame, its influence the ſame, and under the ſame circumſtances. And if ſo, why did it follow, rather than not follow? There is no cauſe or reaſon of this. Therefore here is ſomething without any cauſe or reaſon why it is, *viz.* the following of the effect on the influence of the cauſe, with which it was not neceſſarily connected. If there be a neceſſary connexion of the effect on any thing antecedent, then we may ſuppoſe that ſometimes the event will follow the cauſe, and ſometimes not, when the cauſe is the ſame, and in every reſpect in

the ſame ſtate and circumſtances. And what can be the cauſe and reaſon of this ſtrange phenomenon, even this diverſity, that in one inſtance, the effect ſhould follow, in another not? It is evident by the ſuppoſition, that this is wholly without any cauſe or ground. Here is ſomething in the preſent manner of the exiſtence of things, and ſtate of the world, that is abſolutely without a cauſe; which is contrary to the ſuppoſition, and contrary to what has been before demonſtrated.

3. To ſuppoſe there are ſome events which have a cauſe and ground of their exiſtence, that yet are not neceſſarily connected with their cauſe, is to ſuppoſe that they have a cauſe which is not their cauſe. Thus, if the effect be not neceſſarily connected with the cauſe, with its influence, and influential circumſtances; then, as I obſerved before, it is a thing poſſible and ſuppoſable, that the cauſe may ſometimes exert the ſame influence, under the ſame circumſtances, and yet the effect not follow. And if this actually happens in any inſtance, this inſtance is a proof, in fact, that the influence of the cauſe is not ſufficient to produce the effect. For if it had been ſufficient, it would have done it. And yet, by the ſuppoſition, in another inſtance, the ſame cauſe, with perfectly the ſame influence, and when all circumſtances which have any influence, are the ſame, it *was followed* with the effect. By which it is manifeſt, that the effect in this laſt inſtance was not owing to the influence of the cauſe, but muſt come to paſs ſome other way. For it was proved before, that the influence of the cauſe was not ſufficient to produce the effect. And if it was not ſufficient to produce it, then the production of it could not be owing to that influence, but muſt be owing to ſomething elſe, or owing to nothing. And if the effect be not owing

to the influence of the cauſe, then it is not the cauſe; which brings us to the contradiction of a cauſe, and no cauſe, that which is the ground and reaſon of the exiſtence of a thing, and at the ſame time is not the ground and reaſon of its exiſtence, nor is ſufficient to be ſo.

If the matter be not already ſo plain as to render any further reaſoning upon it impertinent, I would ſay, that that which ſeems to be the cauſe in the ſuppoſed caſe, can be no cauſe; its power and influence having, on a full trial, proved inſufficient to produce ſuch an effect: and if it be not ſufficient to produce it, then it does not produce it. To ſay otherwiſe, is to ſay, there is power to do that which there is not power to do. If there be in a cauſe ſufficient power exerted, and in circumſtances ſufficient to produce an effect, and ſo the effect be actually produced at *one time;* theſe things all concurring, will produce the effect at *all times.* And ſo we may turn it the other way; that which proves not ſufficient at one time, cannot be ſufficient at another, with preciſely the ſame influential circumſtances. And therefore if the effect follows, it is not owing to that cauſe; unleſs the different time be a circumſtance which has influence: but that is contrary to the ſuppoſition; for it is ſuppoſed that all circumſtances that have influence, are the ſame. And beſides, this would be to ſuppoſe the time to be the cauſe; which is contrary to the ſuppoſition of the other thing's being the cauſe. But if merely diverſity of time has no influence, then it is evident that it is as much of an abſurdity to ſay, the cauſe was ſufficient to produce the effect at one time, and not at another; as to ſay, that it is ſufficient to produce the effect at a certain time, and yet not ſufficient to produce the ſame effect at the ſame time.

On the whole, it is clearly manifeſt, that every effect has a neceſſary connexion with its cauſe, or with that which is the true ground and reaſon of its exiſtence. And therefore if there be no event without a cauſe, as was proved before, then no event whatſoever is contingent in the manner, that *Arminians* ſuppoſe the free acts of the Will to be contingent.

Section IX.

Of the Connexion *of the Acts of the Will with the Dictates of the* Underſtanding.

It is manifeſt, that the acts of the Will are none of them contingent in ſuch a ſenſe as to be without all neceſſity, or ſo as not to be neceſſary with a neceſſity of conſequence and Connexion; becauſe every act of the Will is ſome way connected with the Underſtanding, and is as the greateſt apparent good is, in the manner which has already been explained; namely, that the ſoul always wills or chooſes that which, in the preſent view of the mind, conſidered in the whole of that view, and all that belongs to it, appears moſt agreeable. Becauſe, as was obſerved before, nothing is more evident than that, when men act voluntarily, and do what they pleaſe, then they do what appears moſt agreeable to them; and to ſay otherwiſe, would be as much as to affirm, that men do not chooſe what appears to ſuit them beſt, or what ſeems moſt pleaſing to them; or that they do not chooſe what they prefer. Which brings the matter to a contradiction.

And it is very evident in itſelf, that the acts of the Will have ſome Connexion with the dictates or views

of the Understanding, so this is allowed by some of the chief of the *Arminian* writers; particularly by Dr. Whitby and Dr. Samuel Clark. Dr. Turnbull, though a great enemy to the doctrine of necessity, allows the same thing. In his *Christian Philosophy*, (p. 196) he with much approbation cites another philosopher, as of the same mind, in these words: "No man, (says an excellent philosopher) sets himself about any thing, but upon some view or other, "which serves him for a reason for what he does; "and whatsoever faculties he employs, the Understanding, with such light as it has, well or ill formed, constantly leads; and by that light, true or "false, all her operative powers are directed. The "Will itself, how absolute and incontrolable soever "it may be thought, never fails in its obedience to "the dictates of the Understanding. Temples have "their sacred images; and we see what influence "they have always had over a great part of mankind; but in truth, the ideas and images in mens' "minds are the invisible powers that constantly "govern them; and to these they all pay universally a ready submission."

But whether this be in a just consistence with themselves, and their own notions of liberty, I desire may now be impartially considered.

Dr. Whitby plainly supposes, that the acts and determinations of the Will always follow the Understanding's apprehension or view of the greatest good to be obtained, or evil to be avoided; or, in other words, that the determinations of the Will constantly and infallibly follow these two things in the Understanding: 1. The *degree of good* to be obtained, and evil to be avoided, proposed to the Understanding, and apprehended, viewed, and taken notice of by it. 2. The *degree of the Understanding's view*, notice or apprehension of that good or

evil; which is increaſed by attention and conſideration. That this is an opinion he is exceeding peremptory in (as he is in every opinion which he maintains in his controverſy with the *Calvaniſts)* with diſdain of the contrary opinion as abſurd and ſelf-contradictory, will appear by the following words of his, in his Diſcourſe on the Five Points.*

" Now, it is certain, that what naturally makes " the Underſtanding to perceive, is evidence pro- " poſed, and apprehended, conſidered or adverted " to: for nothing elſe can be requiſite to make us " come to the knowledge of the truth. Again, what " makes the Will chooſe, is ſomething approved by " the Underſtanding; and conſequently appearing " to the ſoul as good. And whatſoever it refuſeth, " is ſomething repreſented by the Underſtanding, " and ſo appearing to the Will, as evil. Whence " all that God requires of us is and can be only " this; to refuſe the evil, and chooſe the good. " Wherefore, to ſay that evidence propoſed, appre- " hended and conſidered, is not ſufficient to make " the Underſtanding approve; or that the greateſt " good propoſed, the greateſt evil threatened, when " equally believed and reflected on, is not ſufficient " to engage the Will to chooſe the good and re- " fuſe the evil, is in effect to ſay, *that which alone* " *doth move the Will to chooſe or to refuſe,* is not ſuffi- " cient to engage it ſo to do; which being contra- " dictory to itſelf, muſt of neceſſity be falſe. Be it " then ſo, that we naturally have an averſion to the " truths propoſed to us in the Goſpel; that only " can make us indiſpoſed to attend to them, but " cannot hinder our conviction, when we do ap- " prehend them, and attend to them.—Be it, that " there is in us alſo a renitency to the good we are

* Second Edit. p. 211, 212, 213.

" to choose; that only can indispose us to believe " it is, and to approve it as our chiefest good. Be " it, that we are prone to the evil that we should " decline; that only can render it the more diffi- " cult for us to believe it is the worst of evils. " But yet, *what we do really believe to be our chiefest* " *good, will still be chosen; and what we apprehend* " *to be the worst of evils, will, whilst we do continue* " *under that conviction, be refused by us.* It therefore " can be only requisite, in order to these ends, that " the Good Spirit should so illuminate our Under- " standings, that we attending to, and considering " what lies before us, should apprehend, and be " convinced of our duty; and that the blessings of " the Gospel should be so propounded to us, as " that we may discern them to be our chiefest good; " and the miseries it threateneth, so as we may be " convinced that they are the worst of evils; that " we may choose the one, and refuse the other."

Here let it be observed, how plainly and peremtorily it is asserted, *that the greatest good proposed, and the greatest evil threatened, when equally believed and reflected on, is sufficient to engage the Will to choose the good and refuse the evil, and is that alone which doth move the Will to choose or to refuse; and that it is contradictory to itself, to suppose otherwise; and therefore must of necessity be false; and then what we do really believe to be our chiefest good will still be chosen, and what we apprehend to be the worst of evils, will, whilst we continue under that conviction, be refused by us.* Nothing could have been said more to the purpose, fully to signify and declare, that the determinations of the Will must evermore follow the illumination, conviction and notice of the Understanding, with regard to the greatest good and evil proposed, reckoning both the degree of good and evil understood, and the degree of Understanding, notice and con-

viction of that propoſed good and evil; and that it is thus neceſſarily, and can be otherwiſe in no inſtance: becauſe it is aſſerted, that it implies a contradiction, to ſuppoſe it ever to be otherwiſe.

I am ſenſible the Doctor's aim in theſe aſſertions is againſt the *Calvaniſts;* to ſhew, in oppoſition to them, that there is no need of any phyſical operation of the Spirit of God on the Will, to change and determine that to a good choice, but that God's operation and aſſiſtance is only moral, ſuggeſting ideas to the Underſtanding; which he ſuppoſes to be enough, if thoſe ideas are attended to, infallibly to obtain the end. But whatever his deſign was, nothing can more directly and fully prove, that every determination of the Will, in chooſing and refuſing, *is neceſſary;* directly contrary to his own notion of the liberty of the Will. For if the determination of the Will, evermore, in this manner, follows the light, conviction and view of the Underſtanding, concerning the greateſt good and evil, and this be that alone which moves the Will, and it be a contradiction to ſuppoſe otherwiſe; then it is *neceſſarily* ſo, the Will neceſſarily follows this light or view of the Underſtanding, and not only in ſome of its acts, but in every act of chooſing and refuſing. So that the Will does not determine itſelf in any one of its own acts; but all its acts, every act of choice and refuſal depends on, and is neceſſarily connected with ſome antecedent cauſe; which cauſe is not the Will itſelf, nor any act of its own, nor any thing pertaining to that faculty, but ſomething belonging to another faculty, whoſe acts go before the Will, in all its acts, and govern and determine them every one.

Here, if it ſhould be replied, that although it be true, that according to the Doctor, the final determination of the Will always depends upon, and is infallibly connected with the Underſtanding's convic-

tion, and notice of the greatest good; yet the acts of the Will are not necessary; because that conviction and notice of the Understanding is first dependent on a preceding act of the Will, in determining to attend to, and take notice of the evidence exhibited; by which means the mind obtains that degree of conviction, which is sufficient and effectual to determine the consequent and ultimate choice of the Will; and that the Will, with regard to that preceding act, whereby it determines whether to attend or no, is not necessary; and that in this, the liberty of the Will consists, that when God holds forth sufficient objective light, the Will is at liberty whether to command the attention of the mind to it.

Nothing can be more weak and inconsiderate than such a reply as this. For that preceding act of the Will, in determining to attend and consider, still is an *act of the Will* (it is so to be sure, if the *liberty of the Will* consists in it, as is supposed) and if it be an act of the Will, it is an act of *choice* or *refusal*. And therefore, if what the Doctor asserts be true, it is determined by some antecedent light in the Understanding concerning the greatest apparent good or evil. For he asserts, it is that light *which alone doth move the Will to choose or refuse*. And therefore the Will must be moved by that in choosing to attend to the objective light offered, in order to another consequent act of choice; so that this act is no less necessary than the other. And if we suppose another act of the Will, still preceding both these mentioned, to determine both, still that also must be an act of the Will, and an act of choice; and so must, by the same principles, be infallibly determined by some certain degree of light in the Understanding concerning the greatest good. And let us suppose as many acts of the Will, one preceding another, as

we pleaſe, yet they are every one of them neceſſarily determined by a certain degree of light in the Underſtanding, concerning the greateſt and moſt eligible good in that caſe; and ſo, not one of them free according to Dr. Whitby's notion of freedom.—And if it be ſaid, the reaſon why men do not attend to light held forth, is becauſe of ill habits contracted by evil acts committed before, whereby their minds are indiſpoſed to attend to, and conſider of the truth held forth to them by God, the difficulty is not at all avoided: ſtill the queſtion returns, What determined the Will in thoſe preceding evil acts? It muſt, by Dr. Whitby's principles, ſtill be the view of the Underſtanding concerning the greateſt good and evil. If this view of the Underſtanding be *that alone which doth move the Will to chooſe or refuſe*, as the Doctor aſſerts, then every act of *choice or refuſal*, from a man's firſt exiſtence, is moved and determined by this view; and this view of the Underſtanding exciting and governing the act, muſt be before the act: And therefore the Will is neceſſarily determined, in every one of its acts, from a man's firſt exiſtence, by a cauſe beſide the Will, and a cauſe that does not proceed from, or depend on any act of the Will at all. Which at once utterly aboliſhes the Doctor's whole ſcheme of liberty of Will; and he, at one ſtroke, has cut the ſinews of all his arguments from the goodneſs, righteouſneſs, faithfulneſs and ſincerity of God, in his commands, promiſes, threatenings, calls, invitations, expoſtulations; which he makes uſe of, under the heads of reprobation, election, univerſal redemption, ſufficient and effectual grace, and the freedom of the Will of man; and has enervated and made vain all thoſe exclamations againſt the doctrine of the *Calviniſts*, as charging God with manifeſt unrighteouſneſs, unfaithfulneſs, hypocriſy, fallaciouſneſs, and cruelty; which he has over, and

over, and over again, numberless times in his book.

Dr. Samuel Clark, in his Demonstration of the Being and Attributes of God,* to evade the argument to prove the necessity of volition, from its necessary Connexion with the last dictate of the Understanding, supposes the latter not to be diverse from the act of the Will itself. But if it be so, it will not alter the case as to the evidence of the necessity of the act of the Will. If the dictate of the Understanding be the very same with the determination of the Will or choice, as Dr. Clark supposes, then this determination is no *fruit* or *effect of choice:* and if so, no liberty of choice has any hand in it; as to volition or choice, it is necessary; that is, choice cannot prevent it. If the last dictate of the Understanding be the same with the determination of volition itself, then the existence of that determination must be necessary as to volition; in as much as volition can have no opportunity to determine whether it shall exist or no, it having existence already before volition has opportunity to determine any thing. It is itself the very rise and existence of volition. But a thing after it exists, has no opportunity to determine as to its own existence; it is too late for that.

If liberty consists in that which *Arminians* suppose, *viz.* in the Will's determining its own acts, having free opportunity, and being without all necessity; this is the same as to say, that liberty consists in the soul's having power and opportunity to have what determinations of the Will it pleases or chooses. And if the determinations of the Will, and the last dictates of the Understanding be the same thing, then liberty consists in the mind's having power to have what dictates of the Understanding it pleases, having opportunity to choose its own dictates of Understanding. But this is absurd; for it

* Edit. VI. p. 93.

is to make the determination of choice prior to the dictate of Underſtanding, and the ground of it; which cannot conſiſt with the dictate of Underſtanding's being the determination of choice itſelf.

Here is no way to do in this caſe, but only to recur to the old abſurdity of one determination before another, and the cauſe of it; and another before that, determining that; and ſo on *in infinitum*. If the laſt dictate of the Underſtanding be the determination of the Will itſelf, and the ſoul be free with regard to that dictate, in the *Arminian* notion of freedom; then the ſoul, before that dictate of its Underſtanding exiſts, voluntarily and according to its own choice determines, in every caſe, what that dictate of the Underſtanding ſhall be; otherwiſe that dictate, as to the Will, is neceſſary; and the acts determined by it muſt alſo be neceſſary. So that here is a determination of the mind prior to that dictate of the Underſtanding, an act of choice going before it, chooſing and determining what that dictate of the Underſtanding ſhall be: and this preceding act of choice, being a free act of Will, muſt alſo be the ſame with another laſt dictate of the Underſtanding: and if the mind alſo be free in that dictate of Underſtanding, that muſt be determined ſtill by another; and ſo on for ever.

Beſides, if the dictate of the Underſtanding, and determination of the Will be the ſame, this confounds the Underſtanding and Will, and makes them the ſame. Whether they be the ſame or no, I will not now diſpute; but only would obſerve, that if it be ſo, and the *Arminian* notion of liberty conſiſts in a ſelf-determining power in the Underſtanding, free of all neceſſity; being independent, undetermined by any thing prior to its own acts and determinations; and the more the Underſtanding is thus independent and ſovereign over its own determinations,

the more free. By this, therefore, the freedom of the soul, as a moral agent, must consist in the independence of the Understanding on any evidence or appearance of things, or any thing whatsoever, that stands forth to the view of the mind, prior to the Understanding's determination. And what a sort of liberty is this! consisting in an ability, freedom and easiness of judging, either according to evidence, or against it; having a sovereign command over itself at all times, to judge, either agreeably or disagreeably to what is plainly exhibited to its own view. Certainly it is no liberty that renders persons the proper subjects of persuasive reasoning, arguments, expostulations, and such like moral means and inducements. The use of which with mankind is a main argument of the *Arminians*, to defend their notion of liberty without all necessity. For according to this, the more free men are, the less they are under the government of such means, less subject to the power of evidence and reason, and more independent of their influence, in their determinations.

And whether the Understanding and Will are the same or no, as Dr. Clark seems to suppose, yet in order to maintain the *Arminian* notion of liberty without necessity, the free Will is not determined by the Understanding, nor necessarily connected with the Understanding; and the further from such Connexion, the greater the freedom. And when the liberty is full and complete, the determinations of the Will have no Connexion at all with the dictates of the Understanding. And if so, in vain are all the applications to the Understanding, in order to induce to any free virtuous act; and so in vain are all instructions, counsels, invitations, expostulations, and all arguments and persuasives whatsoever: for these are but applications to the Understanding, and a clear and lively exhibition of the objects of choice

to the mind's view. But if, after all, the Will must be self-determined, and independent of the Understanding, to what purpose are things thus represented to the Understanding, in order to determine the choice?

Section X.

Volition necessarily connected with the Influence of Motives; with particular Observations on the great Inconsistence of Mr. Chubb's Assertions and Reasonings, about the Freedom of the Will.

That every act of the Will has some cause, and consequently (by what has been already proved) has a necessary connexion with its cause, and so is necessary by a necessity of connexion and consequence, is evident by this, that every act of the Will whatsoever is excited by some Motive: which is manifest, because, if the Will or mind, in willing and choosing after the manner that it does, is excited so to do by no Motive or inducement, then it has no end which it proposes to itself, or pursues in so doing; it aims at nothing, and seeks nothing. And if it seeks nothing, then it does not go after any thing, or exert any inclination or preference towards any thing: which brings the matter to a contradiction; because for the mind to Will something, and for it to go after something by an act of preference and inclination, are the same thing.

But if every act of the Will is excited by a Motive, then that Motive is the cause of the act of the Will. If the acts of the Will are excited by Motives, then Motives are the causes of their being excited; or, which is the same thing, the cause of their being put forth into act and existence. And if so,

the existence of the acts of the Will is properly the effect of their Motives. Motives do nothing as Motives or inducements, but by their influence; and so much as is done by their influence is the effect of them. For that is the notion of an effect, something that is brought to pass by the influence of another thing.

And if volitions are properly the effects of their Motives, then they are necessarily connected with their Motives. Every effect and event being, as proved before, necessarily connected with that, which is the proper ground and reason of its existence. Thus it is manifest, that volition is necessary, and is not from any self-determining power in the Will: the volition, which is caused by previous Motive and inducement, is not caused by the Will exercising a sovereign power over itself, to determine, cause and excite volitions in itself. This is not consistent with the Will's acting in a state of indifference and equilibrium, to determine itself to a preference; for the way in which Motives operate, is by biasing the Will, and giving it a certain inclination or preponderation one way.

Here it may be proper to observe, that Mr. Chubb, in his Collection of Tracts on various subjects, has advanced a scheme of liberty, which is greatly divided against itself, and thoroughly subversive of itself; and that many ways.

I. He is abundant in asserting, that the Will, in all its acts, is influenced by Motive and excitement; and that this is the *previous ground and reason* of all its acts, and that it is never otherwise in any instance. He says, (p. 262) *No action can take place without some Motive to excite it.* And in p. 263, *Volition cannot take place without some PREVIOUS reason or Motive to induce it.* And in p. 310, *Action would not take place without some reason or Motive to induce it;*

it being abſurd to ſuppoſe, that the active faculty would be exerted without ſome PREVIOUS reaſon to diſpoſe the mind to action. So alſo p 257. And he ſpeaks of theſe things, as what we may be abſolutely certain of, and which are the foundation, the only foundation we have of a certainty of the moral perfections of God. P. 252, 253, 254, 255, 261, 262, 263, 264.

And yet at the ſame time, by his ſcheme, the influence of Motives upon us to excite to action, and to be actually a ground of volition, is *conſequent* on the volition or choice of the mind. For he very greatly inſiſts upon it, that in all free actions, before the mind is the ſubject of thoſe volitions, which Motives excite, it chooſes to be ſo. It chooſes, whether it will comply with the Motive, which preſents itſelf in view, or not; and when various Motives are preſented, it chooſes which it will yield to, and which it will reject. So p. 256, *Every man has power to act, or to refrain from acting agreeably with, or contrary to, any Motive that preſents.* P. 257, *Every man is at liberty to act, or refrain from acting agreeably with, or contrary to, what each of theſe Motives, conſidered ſingly, would excite him to.—Man has power, and is as much at liberty to reject the Motive that does prevail, as he has power, and is at liberty to reject thoſe Motives that do not.* And ſo p. 310, 311, *In order to conſtitute a moral agent, it is neceſſary, that he ſhould have power to act, or to refrain from acting, upon ſuch moral Motives as he pleaſes.* And to the like purpoſe in many other places. According to theſe things, the Will acts firſt, and chooſes or refuſes to comply with the Motive, that is preſented, before it falls under its prevailing influence: and it is firſt determined by the mind's pleaſure or choice, what Motives it will be induced by, before it is induced by them.

Now, how can theſe things hang together? How

can the mind firſt act, and by its act of *volition* and *choice*, determine what Motive ſhall be the ground and reaſon of its *volition* and *choice?* For this ſuppoſes the choice is already made, before the Motive has its effect; and that the volition is already exerted, before the Motive prevails, ſo as actually to be the ground of the volition; and makes the prevailing of the Motive, the conſequence of the volition, which yet it is the ground of. If the mind has already choſen to comply with a Motive, and to yield to its excitement, it does not need to yield to it after this: for the thing is effected already, that the Motive would excite to, and the Will is beforehand with the excitement; and the excitement comes in too late, and is needleſs and in vain afterwards. If the mind has already choſen to yield to a Motive which *invites* to a thing, that implies, and in fact is a chooſing the thing *invited to;* and the very act of choice is before the influence of the Motive which induces, and is the ground of the choice; the ſon is beforehand with the father that begets him: the choice is ſuppoſed to be the ground of that influence of the Motive, which very influence is ſuppoſed to be the ground of the choice. And ſo *vice verſa*, the choice is ſuppoſed to be the conſequence of the influence of the Motive, which influence of the Motive is the conſequence of that very choice.

And beſides, if the Will acts firſt towards the Motive before it falls under its influence, and the prevailing of the Motive upon it to induce it to act and chooſe, be the fruit and conſequence of its act and choice, then how is the Motive *a PREVIOUS ground and reaſon of the act and choice*, ſo that *in the nature of the things, volition cannot take place without ſome PREVIOUS reaſon and Motive to induce it;* and that this act is conſequent upon, and follows the Motive? Which things Mr. Chubb often aſſerts, as

of certain and undoubted truth. So that the very ſame Motive is both *previous* and *conſequent*, both before and after, both the ground and fruit of the very ſame thing!

II. Agreeable to the forementioned inconſiſtent notion of the Will's firſt acting towards the Motive, chooſing whether it will comply with it, in order to its becoming a ground of the Will's acting, before any act of volition can take place, Mr. Chubb frequently calls Motives and excitements to the action of the Will, *the paſſive ground or reaſon of that action:* Which is a remarkable phraſe; than which I preſume there is none more unintelligible, and void of diſtinct and conſiſtent meaning, in all the writings of Duns Scotus, or Thomas Aquinas. When he repreſents the Motive to action or volition as paſſive, he muſt mean—paſſive in that affair, or paſſive with reſpect to that action which he ſpeaks of; otherwiſe it is nothing to his purpoſe, or relating to the deſign of his argument: he muſt mean, (if that can be called a meaning) that the Motive to volition is firſt acted *upon* or *towards* by the volition, chooſing to yield to it, making it a ground of action, or determining to fetch its influence from thence; and ſo to make it a previous ground of its own excitation and exiſtence. Which is the ſame abſurdity as if one ſhould ſay, that the ſoul of man, or any other thing, ſhould, previous to its exiſting, chooſe what cauſe it would come into exiſtence by, and ſhould act upon its cauſe, to fetch influence from thence, to bring it into being; and ſo its cauſe ſhould be a paſſive ground of its exiſtence!

Mr. Chubb does very plainly ſuppoſe Motive or excitement to be the *ground of the being* of volition. He ſpeaks of it as the ground or reaſon of the EXERTION of an act of the Will, p. 391, and 392, and expreſsly ſays, that *volition cannot TAKE*

PLACE without ſome *previous ground or Motive to induce it*, p. 363. And he ſpeaks of the act as *FROM the Motive*, and *FROM THE INFLUENCE of the Motive*, p. 352, and from *the influence that the Motive has on the man, for the PRODUCTION of an action*, p. 317. Certainly there is no need of multiplying words about this; it is eaſily judged, whether Motive can be the ground of volition's being exerted and taking place, ſo that the very production of it is from the influence of the Motive, and yet the Motive, before it becomes the ground of the volition, is paſſive, or acted upon by the volition. But this I will ſay, that a man, who inſiſts ſo much on clearneſs of meaning in others, and is ſo much in blaming their confuſion and inconſiſtence, ought, if he was able, to have explained his meaning in this phraſe of *paſſive ground of action*, ſo as to ſhew it not to be confuſed and inconſiſtent.

If any ſhould ſuppoſe, that Mr. Chubb, when he ſpeaks of Motive as a *paſſive ground of action*, does not mean paſſive with regard to that volition which it is the ground of, but ſome other antecedent volition, (though his purpoſe and argument, and whole diſcourſe, will by no means allow of ſuch a ſuppoſition) yet it would not help the matter in the leaſt. For, (1.) If we ſuppoſe there to be an act of volition or choice, by which the ſoul chooſes to yield to the invitation of a Motive to another volition, by which the ſoul chooſes ſomething elſe; both theſe ſuppoſed volitions are in effect the very ſame. A volition, or chooſing to yield to the force of a Motive inviting to chooſe ſomething, comes to juſt the ſame thing as chooſing the thing, which the Motive invites to, as I obſerved before. So that here can be no room to help the matter, by a diſtinction of two volitions. (2.) If the Motive be paſſive with reſpect, not to the ſame volition that the Motive ex-

cites to, but one truly diſtinct and prior; yet, by Mr. Chubb, that prior volition cannot take place, without a Motive or excitement, as a *previous ground* of its exiſtence. For he inſiſts, that *it is abſurd to ſuppoſe any volition ſhould take place without ſome previous Motive to induce it.* So that at laſt it comes to juſt the ſame abſurdity: for if *every* volition muſt have a previous Motive, then the very *firſt* in the whole ſeries muſt be excited by a previous Motive; and yet the Motive to that firſt volition is paſſive; but cannot be paſſive with regard to another antecedent volition, becauſe, by the ſuppoſition, it is the very firſt: therefore if it be paſſive with reſpect to any volition, it muſt be ſo with regard to that very volition that it is the ground of, and that is excited by it.

III. Though Mr. Chubb aſſerts, as above, that every volition has ſome Motive, and that *in the nature of the thing, no volition can take place without ſome Motive to induce it;* yet he aſſerts, that volition does not always follow the ſtrongeſt Motive; or, in other words, is not governed by any ſuperior ſtrength of the Motive that is followed, beyond Motives to the contrary, previous to the volition itſelf. His own words, p. 258, are as follow: "Though with re- "gard to phyſical cauſes, that which is ſtrongeſt al- "ways prevails, yet it is otherwiſe with regard to "moral cauſes. Of theſe, ſometimes the ſtronger, "ſometimes the weaker, prevails. And the ground "of this difference is evident, namely, that what we "call moral cauſes, ſtrictly ſpeaking, are no cauſes "at all, but barely paſſive reaſons of, or excite- "ments to the action, or to the refraining from act- "ing: which excitements we have power, or are at "liberty to comply with or reject, as I have ſhewed "above." And ſo throughout the paragraph, he, in a variety of phraſes, inſiſts, that the Will is not

always determined by the ſtrongeſt Motive, unleſs by ſtrongeſt we prepoſterouſly mean actually prevailing in the event; which is not in the Motive, but in the Will; but that the Will is not always determined by the Motive, which is ſtrongeſt, by any ſtrength previous to the volition itſelf. And he elſewhere does abundantly aſſert, that the Will is determined by no ſuperior ſtrength or advantage, that Motives have, from any conſtitution or ſtate of things, or any circumſtances whatſoever, previous to the actual determination of the Will. And indeed his whole diſcourſe on human liberty implies it, his whole ſcheme is founded upon it.

But theſe things cannot ſtand together.—There is ſuch a thing as a diverſity of ſtrength in Motives to choice, previous to the choice itſelf. Mr. Chubb himſelf ſuppoſes, that they do *previouſly invite, induce, excite* and *diſpoſe the mind to action*. This implies, that they have ſomething in themſelves that is *inviting*, ſome tendency to *induce* and *diſpoſe* to volition, previous to volition itſelf. And if they have in themſelves this nature and tendency, doubtleſs they have it in certain limited degrees, which are capable of diverſity; and ſome have it in greater degrees, others in leſs; and they that have moſt of this tendency, conſidered with all their nature and circumſtances, previous to volition, they are the ſtrongeſt motives; and thoſe that have leaſt, are the weakeſt Motives.

Now if volition ſometimes does not follow the Motive which is ſtrongeſt, or has moſt previous tendency or advantage, all things conſidered, to induce or excite it, but follows the weakeſt, or that which as it ſtands previouſly in the mind's view, has leaſt tendency to induce it; herein the Will apparently acts wholly without Motive, without any previous reaſon to diſpoſe the mind to it, contrary to what the ſame author ſuppoſes. The act, wherein

the Will muſt proceed without a previous Motive to induce it, is the act of preferring the weakeſt Motive. For how abſurd is it to ſay, the mind ſees previous reaſon in the Motive, to prefer that Motive before the other; and at the ſame time to ſuppoſe, that there is nothing in the Motive, in its nature, ſtate, or any circumſtance of it whatſoever, as it ſtands in the previous view of the mind, that gives it any preference; but on the contrary, the other Motive that ſtands in competition with it, in all theſe reſpects, has moſt belonging to it, that is inviting and moving, and has moſt of a tendency to choice and preference. This is certainly as much as to ſay, there is previous ground and reaſon in the Motive for the act of preference, and yet no previous reaſon for it. By the ſuppoſition, as to all that is in the two rival Motives, which tends to preference, previous to the act of preference, it is not in that which is preferred, but wholly in the other: becauſe appearing ſuperior ſtrength, and all appearing preferableneſs is in that; and yet Mr. Chubb ſuppoſes, that the act of preference is from *previous ground and reaſon* in the Motive which is preferred. But are theſe things conſiſtent? Can there be previous ground in a thing for an event that takes place, and yet no previous tendency in it to that event? If one thing follows another, without any previous tendency to its following, then I ſhould think it very plain, that it follows it without any manner of previous reaſon, why it ſhould follow.

Yea, in this caſe, Mr. Chubb ſuppoſes, that the event follows an antecedent or a previous thing, as the ground of its exiſtence, not only that has *no tendency* to it, but *a contrary tendency*. The event is the preference, which the mind gives to that Motive, which is weaker, as it ſtands in the previous view of the mind; the immediate antecedent is the view the

mind has of the two rival Motives conjunctly; in which previous view of the mind, all the preferableness, or previous tendency to preference, is supposed to be on the other side, or in the contrary Motive; and all the unworthiness of preference, and so previous tendency to comparative neglect, rejection or undervaluing, is on that side which is preferred: and yet in this view of the mind is supposed to be the *previous ground or reason* of this act of preference, *exciting it, and disposing the mind to it.* Which, I leave the reader to judge, whether it be absurd or not. If it be not, then it is not absurd to say, that the previous tendency of an antecedent to a consequent, is the ground and reason why that consequent does not follow; and the want of a previous tendency to an event, yea, a tendency to the contrary, is the true ground and reason why that event does follow.

An act of choice or preference is a comparative act, wherein the mind acts with reference to two or more things that are compared, and stand in competition in the mind's view. If the mind, in this comparative act, prefers that which appears inferior in the comparison, then the mind herein acts absolutely without Motive, or inducement, or any temptation whatsoever. Then, if a hungry man has the offer of two sorts of food, both which he finds an appetite to, but has a stronger appetite to one than the other; and there be no circumstances or excitements whatsoever in the case to induce him to take either the one or the other, but merely his appetite: if in the choice he makes between them, he chooses that, which he has least appetite to, and refuses that, to which he has the strongest appetite, this is a choice made absolutely without previous Motive, excitement, reason, or temptation, as much as if he were perfectly without all appetite to either: because his

volition in this caſe is a comparative act, attending and following a comparative view of the food, which he chooſes, viewing it as related to, and compared with the other ſort of food, in which view his preference has abſolutely no previous ground, yea, is againſt all previous ground and Motive. And if there be any principle in man, from whence an act of choice may ariſe after this manner, from the ſame principle volition may ariſe wholly without Motive on either ſide. If the mind in its volition can go beyond Motive, then it can go without Motive: for when it is beyond the Motive, it is out of the reach of the Motive, out of the limits of its influence, and ſo without Motive. If volition goes beyond the ſtrength and tendency of Motive, and eſpecially if it goes againſt its tendency, this demonſtrates the independence of volition or Motive. And if ſo, no reaſon can be given for what Mr. Chubb ſo often aſſerts, even that *in the nature of things volition cannot take place without a Motive to induce it.*

If the Moſt High ſhould endow a balance with agency or activity of nature, in ſuch a manner, that when unequal weights are put into the ſcales, its agency could enable it to cauſe that ſcale to deſcend, which has the leaſt weight, and to raiſe the greater weight; this would clearly demonſtrate, that the motion of the balance does not depend on weights in the ſcales, at leaſt as much as if the balance ſhould move itſelf, when there is no weight in either ſcale. And the activity of the balance which is ſufficient to move itſelf againſt the greater weight, muſt certainly be more than ſufficient to move it when there is no weight at all.

Mr. Chubb ſuppoſes, that the Will cannot ſtir at all without ſome Motive; and alſo ſuppoſes, that if there be a Motive to one thing, and none to the contrary, volition will infallibly follow that Motive.—

This is virtually to suppose an entire dependence of the Will on Motives: if it were not wholly dependent on them, it could surely help itself a little without them, or help itself a little against a Motive, without help from the strength and weight of a contrary Motive. And yet his supposing that the Will, when it has before it various opposite Motives, can use them as it pleases, and choose its own influence from them, and neglect the strongest, and follow the weakest, supposes it to be wholly independent on Motives.

It further appears, on Mr. Chubb's supposition, that volition must be without any previous ground in any Motive, thus: if it be, as he supposes, that the Will is not determined by any previous superior strength of the Motive, but determines and chooses its own Motive, then, when the rival Motives are exactly equal in strength and tendency to induce, in all respects, it may follow either; and may in such a case, sometimes follow one, sometimes the other.—And if so, this diversity which appears between the acts of the Will, is plainly without previous ground in either of the Motives; for all that is previously in the Motives, is supposed precisely and perfectly the same, without any diversity whatsoever. Now perfect identity, as to all that is previous in the antecedent, cannot be the ground and reason of diversity in the consequent. Perfect identity in the ground cannot be the reason why it is not followed with the same consequence. And therefore the source of this diversity of consequence must be sought for elsewhere.

And lastly, it may be observed, that however Mr. Chubb does much insist that no volition can take place without some Motive to induce it, which previously disposes the mind to it; yet, as he also insists that the mind, without reference to any superior

ſtrength of Motives, picks and chooſes for its Motive to follow; he himſelf herein plainly ſuppoſes, that with regard to the mind's preference of one Motive before another, it is not the Motive that diſpoſes the Will, but the Will diſpoſes itſelf to follow the Motive.

IV. Mr. Chubb ſuppoſes neceſſity to be utterly inconſiſtent with *agency;* and that to ſuppoſe a being to be an agent in that which is neceſſary, is a plain contradiction. P. 311, and throughout his diſcourſes on the ſubject of liberty, he ſuppoſes, that neceſſity cannot conſiſt with agency or freedom; and that to ſuppoſe otherwiſe, is to make liberty and neceſſity, action and paſſion, the ſame thing. And ſo he ſeems to ſuppoſe, that there is no action, ſtrictly ſpeaking, but volition; and that as to the effects of volition in body or mind, in themſelves conſidered, being neceſſary, they are ſaid to be free, only as they are the effects of an act that is not neceſſary.

And yet, according to him, volition itſelf is the *effect of volition;* yea, every act of free volition: and therefore every act of free volition muſt, by what has now been obſerved from him, be neceſſary.—That every act of free volition is itſelf the effect of volition, is abundantly ſuppoſed by him. In p. 341, he ſays, "If a man is ſuch a creature as I have prov-"ed him to be, that is, if he has in him a power or "liberty of doing either good or evil, and either of "theſe is the ſubject of his own free choice, ſo that "he might, IF HE HAD PLEASED, have CHOS-"EN and done the contrary." Here he ſuppoſes, all that is good or evil in man is the effect of his choice; and ſo that his good or evil choice itſelf, is the effect of his pleaſure or choice, in theſe words, *he might, if he had PLEASED, have CHOSEN the contrary.* So in p. 356, "Though it be highly reaſ-"onable, that a man ſhould always chooſe the great-"er good—yet he may, if he PLEASE, CHOOSE

"otherwiſe." Which is the ſame thing as if he had ſaid, *he may, if he chooſes, chooſe otherwiſe.* And then he goes on—"that is, he may, *if he pleaſes, chooſe* "what is good for himſelf," &c. And again in the ſame page, "The Will is not confined by the un- "derſtanding, to any particular ſort of good, wheth- "er greater or leſs; but is at liberty *to chooſe* what "kind of good *it pleaſes.*"—If there be any meaning in the laſt words, the meaning muſt be this, that *the Will is at liberty to chooſe what kind of good it chooſes to chooſe;* ſuppoſing the act of choice itſelf determined by an antecedent choice. The liberty Mr. Chubb ſpeaks of, is not only a man's having power to move his body agreeably to an antecedent act of choice, but to uſe, or exert the faculties of his ſoul. Thus, in p. 379, ſpeaking of the faculties of his mind, he ſays, "Man has power, and is at liberty to neglect "theſe faculties, to uſe them aright, or to abuſe "them, *as he pleaſes.*" And that he ſuppoſes an act of choice, or exerciſe of pleaſure, properly diſtinct *from*, and antecedent *to*, thoſe acts thus choſen, directing, commanding and producing the choſen acts, and even the acts of choice themſelves, is very plain in p. 283, "He can *command his actions;* and here- "in conſiſts his liberty; he can give or deny him- "ſelf that pleaſure, *as he pleaſes.*" And p. 377, "If the actions of men are not the *produce of a free* "*choice*, or election, but ſpring from a neceſſity of "nature, he cannot in reaſon be the object of re- "ward or puniſhment on their account. Where- "as, if action in man, whether good or evil, is *the* "*produce of Will or free choice;* ſo that a man in ei- "ther caſe, had it in his power, and was at liberty "to have CHOSEN the contrary, he is the proper "object of reward or puniſhment, according as he "CHOOSES to behave himſelf." Here, in theſe laſt words, he ſpeaks of *liberty of CHOOSING, ac-*

cording as he CHOOSES. So that the behaviour which he ſpeaks of as ſubject to his choice, is his *chooſing* itſelf, as well as his external conduct conſequent upon it. And therefore it is evident, he means not only external actions, but the acts of choice themſelves, when he ſpeaks of *all free actions, as the PRODUCE of free choice.* And this is abundantly evident in what he ſays in p. 372, 373.

Now theſe things imply a twofold great abſurdity and inconſiſtence.

1. To ſuppoſe, as Mr. Chubb plainly does, that every free act of choice is *commanded by*, and is the *produce of free choice*, is to ſuppoſe the firſt free act of choice belonging to the caſe, yea, the firſt free act of choice that ever man exerted, to be *the produce* of an antecedent act of choice. But I hope I need not labor at all to convince my readers, that it is an abſurdity to ſay, the very *firſt* act is the produce of another act that went *before* it.

2. If it were both poſſible and real, as Mr. Chubb inſiſts, that every free act of choice were the produce or the effect of a free act of choice; yet even then, according to his principles, no one act of choice would be free, but every one neceſſary; becauſe, every act of choice being the effect of a foregoing act, every act would be neceſſarily connected with that foregoing cauſe. For Mr. Chubb himſelf ſays, p. 389, "When "the ſelf-moving power is exerted, it becomes the "neceſſary cauſe of its effects."—So that his notion of a free act, that is rewardable or puniſhable, is a heap of contradictions. It is a free act, and yet, by his own notion of freedom, is neceſſary; and therefore by him it is a contradiction, to ſuppoſe it to be free. According to him, every free act is the produce of a free act; ſo that there muſt be an infinite number of free acts in ſucceſſion, without any beginning, in an agent that has a beginning. And

therefore here is an infinite number of free acts, every one of them free; and yet not one of them free, but every act in the whole infinite chain a neceſſary effect. All the acts are rewardable or puniſhable, and yet the agent cannot, in reaſon, be the object of reward or puniſhment, on account of any one of theſe actions. He is active in them all, and paſſive in none; yet active in none, but paſſive in all, *&c.*

V. Mr. Chubb does moſt ſtrenuouſly deny, that Motives are *cauſes* of the acts of the Will; or that the moving principle in man is *moved*, or *cauſed to be exerted* by Motives. His words, p. 388 and 389, are, "If the moving principle in man is MOVED, or "CAUSED TO BE EXERTED, by ſomething ex- "ternal to man, *which all Motives are*, then it would "not be a ſelf-moving principle, ſeeing it would be "moved by a principle external to itſelf. And to "ſay, that a ſelf-moving principle is MOVED, or "CAUSED TO BE EXERTED, by a cauſe exter- "nal to itſelf, is abſurd and a contradiction," &c. And in the next page, it is particularly and largely inſiſted, that Motives are cauſes in no caſe, that *they are merely paſſive in the production of action, and have no cauſality in the production of it; no cauſality, to be the cauſe of the exertion of the Will.*

Now I deſire it may be conſidered, how this can poſſibly conſiſt with what he ſays in other places. Let it be noted here,

1. Mr. Chubb abundantly ſpeaks of Motives as *excitements of the acts of the Will;* and ſays, that *Motives do excite volition, and induce it*, and that they are neceſſary to this end; that *in the reaſon and nature of things, volition cannot take place without Motives to excite it.* But now, if Motives *excite* the Will, they *move* it; and yet he ſays, it is abſurd to ſay, the Will is moved by Motives. And again, (if language is of any ſignificancy at all) if Motives excite volition,

then they are the *cauſe* of its being excited; and to cauſe volition to be excited, is to cauſe it to be put forth or *exerted*. Yea, Mr. Chubb ſays himſelf, p. 317, Motive is neceſſary to the *exertion* of the active faculty. To excite, is poſitively to *do* ſomething; and certainly that which does ſomething, is the cauſe of the thing *done* by it. To create, is to cauſe to be created; to make, is to cauſe to be made; to kill, is to cauſe to be killed; to quicken, is to cauſe to be quickened; and *to excite*, is *to cauſe to be excited*. To excite, is to be a cauſe, in the moſt proper ſenſe, not merely a negative occaſion, but a ground of exiſtence by poſitive influence. The notion of *exciting*, is exerting influence to cauſe the effect to ariſe or come forth into exiſtence.

2. Mr. Chubb himſelf, p. 317, ſpeaks of Motives as the ground and reaſon of action BY INFLUENCE, and BY PREVAILING INFLUENCE. Now, what can be meant by a cauſe, but ſomething that is the ground and reaſon of a thing by its influence, an influence that is *prevalent* and ſo effectual?

3. This author not only ſpeaks of Motives as the ground and reaſon of action, by prevailing influence; but expreſsly of their *influence as prevailing* FOR THE PRODUCTION of an action, in the ſame p. 317: which makes the inconſiſtency ſtill more palpable and notorious. The production of an effect is certainly the *cauſing* of an effect; and *productive influence* is *cauſal influence*, if any thing is; and that which has this influence prevalently, ſo as thereby to become the ground of another thing, is a cauſe of that thing, if there be any ſuch thing as a cauſe. This influence, Mr. Chubb ſays, Motives have to produce an action; and yet, he ſays, it is abſurd and a contradiction, to ſay they are cauſes.

4. In the ſame page, he once and again ſpeaks of Motives as *diſpoſing* the agent to action, *by their in-*

fluence. His words are these: "As Motive, which "takes place in the understanding, and is the pro- "duct of intelligence, is NECESSARY to action, "that is, to the EXERTION of the active faculty, "because that faculty would not be exerted without "some PREVIOUS REASON to DISPOSE the "mind to action; so from hence it plainly appears, "that when a man is said to be *disposed* to one ac- "tion rather than another, this properly signifies "the PREVAILING INFLUENCE that one Mo- "tive has upon a man FOR THE PRODUCTION "of an action, or for the being at rest, before all "other Motives, for the *production* of the contrary. "For as Motive is the ground and reason of any "action, so the Motive that *prevails*, DISPOSES the "agent to the performance of that action."

Now, if Motives dispose the mind to action, then they *cause* the mind to be disposed; and to cause the mind to be disposed is to cause it to be willing; and to cause it to be willing is to cause it to Will; and that is the same thing as to be the cause of an act of the Will. And yet this same Mr. Chubb holds it to be absurd, to suppose Motive to be a cause of the act of the Will.

And if we compare these things together, we have here again a whole heap of inconsistencies. *Motives are the previous ground and reason* of the acts of the Will; yea, the *necessary* ground and reason of *their exertion, without which they will not be exerted, and cannot, in the nature of things, take place;* and they do *excite* these acts of the Will, and do this by *a prevailing influence;* yea, *an influence which prevails for the production of the act* of the Will, and for *the disposing of the mind to it;* and yet it is *absurd* to suppose *Motive to be a cause* of an act of the Will, or that *a principle of Will is moved or caused to be exerted by it,* or that it has *any causality in the production of it,* or *any causality to be the cause of the exertion of the Will.*

A due conſideration of theſe things which Mr. Chubb has advanced, the ſtrange inconſiſtencies which the notion of liberty, conſiſting in the Will's power of ſelf-determination void of all neceſſity, united with that dictate of common ſenſe, that there can be no volition without a Motive, drove him into, may be ſufficient to convince us, that it is utterly impoſſible ever to make that notion of liberty conſiſtent with the influence of Motives in volition. And as it is in a manner ſelf-evident, that there can be no act of Will, choice, or preference of the mind, without ſome Motive or inducement, ſomething in the mind's view, which it aims at, ſeeks, inclines to, and goes after; ſo it is moſt manifeſt, there is no ſuch liberty in the univerſe as *Arminians* inſiſt on; nor any ſuch thing poſſible, or conceivable.

Section XI.

The Evidence of GOD's certain Foreknowledge *of the Volitions of moral Agents.*

That the acts of the Wills of moral agents are not contingent events, in that ſenſe, as to be without all neceſſity, appears by God's certain foreknowledge of ſuch events.

In handling this argument, I would in the *firſt* place prove, that God has a certain foreknowledge of the voluntary acts of moral agents; and *ſecondly*, ſhew the conſequence, or how it follows from hence, that the volitions of moral agents are not contingent, ſo as to be without neceſſity of connexion and conſequence.

First, I am to prove, that God has an abſolute and certain foreknowledge of the free actions of moral agents.

One would think, it ſhould be wholly needleſs to enter on ſuch an argument with any that profeſs themſelves chriſtians: but ſo it is; God's certain foreknowledge of the free acts of moral agents, is denied by ſome that pretend to believe the ſcriptures to be the word of God; and eſpecially of late. I therefore ſhall conſider the evidence of ſuch a preſcience in the Moſt High, as fully as the deſigned limits of this eſſay will admit of; ſuppoſing myſelf herein to have to do with ſuch as own the truth of the bible.

Arg. I. My *firſt* argument ſhall be taken from God's *prediction* of ſuch events. Here I would, in the firſt place, lay down theſe two things as axioms.

(1.) If God does not foreknow, he cannot foretell ſuch events; that is, he cannot peremtorily and certainly foretell them. If God has no more than an uncertain gueſs concerning events of this kind, then he can declare no more than an uncertain gueſs. Poſitively to foretell, is to profeſs to foreknow, or declare poſitive foreknowledge.

(2.) If God does not certainly foreknow the future volitions of moral agents, then neither can he certainly foreknow thoſe events which are conſequent and dependent on theſe volitions. The exiſtence of the one depending on the exiſtence of the other, the knowledge of the exiſtence of the one depends on the knowledge of the exiſtence of the other; and the one cannot be more certain than the other.

Therefore, how many, how great, and how extenſive ſoever the conſequences of the volitions of moral agents may be; though they ſhould extend to an alteration of the ſtate of things through the univerſe, and ſhould be continued in a ſeries of ſucceſſive events to all eternity, and ſhould in the progreſs of things branch forth into an infinite number of ſeries, each of them going on in an endleſs line or chain

of events; God must be as ignorant of all these consequences, as he is of the volitions whence they first take their rise: all these events, and the whole state of things depending on them, how important, extensive and vast soever, must be hid from him.

These positions being such as, I suppose, none will deny, I now proceed to observe the following things.

1. Men's moral conduct and qualities, their virtues and vices, their wickedness and good practice, things rewardable and punishable, have often been foretold by God.—Pharaoh's moral conduct, in refusing to obey God's command, in letting his people go, was foretold. God says to Moses, Exod. iii. 19, *I am sure, that the King of Egypt will not let you go.* Here God professes not only to guess at, but to know Pharaoh's future disobedience. In chap. vii. 4, God says, *but Pharaoh shall not hearken unto you; that I may lay mine hand upon Egypt*, &c. And chap. ix. 30, Moses says to Pharaoh, *as for thee, and thy servants, I KNOW that ye will not fear the Lord.* See also chap. xi. 9.—The moral conduct of Josiah, by name, in his zealously exerting himself in opposition to idolatry, in particular acts of his, was foretold above three hundred years before he was born, and the prophecy sealed by a miracle, and renewed and confirmed by the words of a second prophet, as what surely would not fail, 1 Kings xiii. 1—6, 32. This prophecy was also in effect a prediction of the moral conduct of the people, in upholding their schismatical and idolatrous worship until that time, and the idolatry of those priests of the high places, which it is foretold Josiah should offer upon that altar of Bethel.—Micaiah foretold the foolish and sinful conduct of Ahab, in refusing to hearken to the word of the Lord by him, and choosing rather to hearken to the false prophets, in going to Ramoth-Gilead to his

ruin, 1 Kings xxi. 20—22. The moral conduct of Hazael was foretold, in that cruelty he should be guilty of; on which Hazael says, *What, is thy servant a dog, that he should do this thing!* The prophet speaks of the event as what he knew, and not what he conjectured, 2 Kings viii. 12. *I know the evil that thou wilt do unto the children of Israel: Thou wilt dash their children, and rip up their women with child.* The moral conduct of Cyrus is foretold, long before he had a being, in his mercy to God's people, and regard to the true God, in turning the captivity of the Jews, and promoting the building of the Temple, Isai. xliv. 28. and lxv. 13. Compare 2 Chron. xxxvi. 22. 23. and Ezra i. 1—4. How many instances of the moral conduct of the *Kings of the North and South*, particular instances of the wicked behavior of the Kings of Syria and Egypt, are foretold in the xith chapter of Daniel? Their corruption, violence, robbery, treachery, and lies. And particularly, how much is foretold of the horrid wickedness of Antiochus Epiphanes, called there a *vile person*, instead of Epiphanes, or illustrious. In that chapter, and also in chap. viii. verses 9, 14, 23, to the end, are foretold his flattery, deceit and lies, his having *his heart set to do mischief*, and set *against the holy covenant*, his *destroying and treading under foot the holy people*, in a marvellous manner, his *having indignation against the holy covenant, setting his heart against it*, and *conspiring against it*, his *polluting the sanctuary of strength, treading it under foot, taking away the daily sacrifice, and placing the abomination that maketh desolate*; his great pride, *magnifying himself against God*, and *uttering marvellous blasphemies against him*, until God in *indignation should destroy him*. Withal, the moral conduct of the Jews, on occasion of his persecution, is predicted. It is foretold, that *he should corrupt many by flatteries*, chap. xi. 32—34. But that

others ſhould behave with a glorious conſtancy and fortitude in oppoſition to him, ver. 32. And that ſome good men ſhould fall and repent, ver. 35. Chriſt foretold Peter's ſin, in denying his Lord, with its circumſtances, in a peremptory manner. And ſo, that great ſin of Judas, in betraying his maſter, and its dreadful and eternal puniſhment in hell, was foretold in the like poſitive manner, Mat. xxvi. 21—25, and parellel places in the other Evangeliſts.

2. Many events have been foretold by God, which are conſequent and dependent on the moral conduct of particular perſons, and were accompliſhed, either by their virtuous or vicious actions.—Thus, the children of Iſreal's going down into Egypt to dwell there, was foretold to Abraham, Gen. xv. which was brought about by the wickedneſs of Joſeph's brethren in ſelling him, and the wickedneſs of Joſeph's miſtreſs, and his own ſignal virtue in reſiſting her temptation. The accompliſhment of the thing prefigured in Joſeph's dream, depended on the ſame moral conduct. Jotham's parable and prophecy, Judges ix. 15—20, was accompliſhed by the wicked conduct of Abimelech, and the men of Sechem. The prophecies againſt the houſe of Eli, 1 Sam. chap. ii. and iii. were accompliſhed by the wickedneſs of Doeg the Edomite, in accuſing the prieſts; and the great impiety, and extreme cruelty of Saul in deſtroying the prieſts at Nob, 1 Sam. xxii.—Nathan's prophecy againſt David, 2 Sam. xii. 11, 12, was fulfilled by the horrible wickedneſs of Abſalom, in rebelling againſt his father, ſeeking his life, and lying with his concubines in the ſight of the ſun. The prophecy againſt Solomon, 1 Kings xi. 11—13, was fulfilled by Jeroboam's rebellion and uſurpation, which are ſpoken of as his wickedneſs, 2 Chron. xiii. 5, 6, compare ver. 18. The prophecy againſt Jeroboam's family, 1 Kings xiv. was ful-

filled by the conſpiracy, treaſon, and cruel murders of Baaſha, 2 Kings xv. 27, &c. The predictions of the prophet Jehu againſt the houſe of Baaſha, 1 Kings xvi. at the beginning, were fulfilled by the treaſon and parricide of Zimri, 1 Kings xvi. 9, 13, 20.

3. How often has God foretold the future moral conduct of nations and people, of numbers, bodies, and ſucceſſions of men: with God's judicial proceedings, and many other events conſequent and dependent on their virtues and vices; which could not be foreknown, if the volitions of men, wherein they acted as *moral agents*, had not been foreſeen? The future cruelty of the Egyptians in oppreſſing Iſrael, and God's judging and puniſhing them for it, was foretold long before it came to paſs, Gen. xv. 13, 14. The continuance of the iniquity of the Amorites, and the increaſe of it until it *ſhould be full*, and they ripe for deſtruction, was foretold above four hundred years before-hand, Gen. xv. 16. Acts vii. 6, 7. The prophecies of the deſtruction of Jeruſalem, and the land of Judah, were abſolute; 2 Kings xx. 17—19. chap. xxii. 15, to the end. It was foretold in Hezekiah's time, and was abundantly inſiſted on in the book of the prophet Iſaiah, who wrote nothing after Hezekiah's days. It was foretold in Joſiah's time, in the beginning of a great reformation, 2 Kings xxii. And it is manifeſt by innumerable things in the prediction of the prophets, relating to this event, its time, its circumſtances, its continuance and end; the return from the captivity, the reſtoration of the temple, city and land, and many circumſtances and conſequences of *that*; I ſay, theſe ſhew plainly, that the prophecies of this great event were *abſolute*. And yet this event was connected with, and dependent on two things in men's moral conduct: firſt, the injurious rapine and violence of the king of Babylon and his people, as the efficient cauſe;

which God often ſpeaks of as what he highly reſented, and would ſeverely puniſh; and 2dly, the final obſtinacy of the Jews. That great event is often ſpoken of as ſuſpended on this, Jer. iv. 1, and v. 1. vii. 1—7. xi. 1—6. xvii. 24, to the end, xxv. 1—7. xxvi. 1—8, 13, and xxxviii. 17, 18. Therefore this deſtruction and captivity could not be foreknown, unleſs ſuch a moral conduct of the Chaldeans and Jews had been foreknown. And then it was foretold, that the people *ſhould be finally obſtinate*, to the deſtruction and utter deſolation of the city and land, Iſa. vi. 9—11. Jer. i. 18, 19. vii. 27—29. Ezek. iii. 7, and xxiv. 13, 14.

The final obſtinacy of thoſe Jews who were left in the land of Iſrael, in their idolatry and rejection of the true God, was foretold by God, and the prediction confirmed with an oath, Jer. xliv. 26, 27. And God tells the people, Iſa. xlviii. 3, 4—8, that he had predicted thoſe things which ſhould be conſequent on their treachery and obſtinacy, becauſe he knew they would be obſtinate, and that he had declared theſe things before-hand for their conviction of his being the only true God, *&c.*

The deſtruction of Babylon, with many of the circumſtances of it, was foretold, as the judgment of God for the exceeding pride and haughtineſs of the heads of that monarchy, Nebuchadnezzar, and his ſucceſſors, and their wickedly deſtroying other nations, and particularly for their exalting themſelves againſt the true God and his people, before any of theſe monarchs had a being; Iſa. chap. xiii. xiv. xlvii: compare Habbak. ii. 5, to the end, and Jer. chap. l. and li. That Babylon's deſtruction was to be a *recompence, according to the works of their own hands*, appears by Jer. xxv. 14. The immorality with which the people of Babylon, and particularly her princes and great men, were guily of, that very

night that the city was deſtroyed, their revelling and drunkenneſs at Balſhazzer's idolatrous feaſt, was foretold, Jer. li. 39, 57.

The return of the Jews from the Babyloniſh captivity is often very particularly foretold with many circumſtances, and the promiſes of it are very peremptory; Jer. xxxi. 35—40, and xxxii. 6—15, 41—44, and xxxiii. 24—26. And the very time of their return was prefixed; Jer. xxv. 11, 12, and xxix. 10, 11. 2 Chron. xxxvi. 21. Ezek. iv. 6, and Dan. ix. 2. And yet the prophecies repreſent their return as conſequent on their repentance. And their repentance itſelf is very expreſsly and particularly foretold, Jer. xxix. 12, 13, 14. xxxi. 8, 9, 18—31. xxxiii. 8. l. 4, 5. Ezek. vi. 8, 9, 10. vii. 16. xiv. 22, 23, and xx. 43, 44.

It was foretold under the Old Teſtament, that the Meſſiah ſhould ſuffer greatly through the malice and cruelty of men; as is largely and fully ſet forth, Pſal. xxii. applied to Chriſt in the New Teſtament, Matt. xxvii. 35, 43. Luke xxiii. 34. John xix. 24. Heb. ii. 12. And likewiſe in Pſal. lxix. which, it is alſo evident by the New Teſtament, is ſpoken of Chriſt; John xv. 25. vii. 5, *&c.* and ii. 17. Rom. xv. 3. Matt. xxvii. 34. 48. Mark xv. 23. John xix. 29. The ſame thing is alſo foretold, Iſa. liii. and l. 6, and Mic. v. 1. This cruelty of men was their ſin, and what they acted as moral agents. It was foretold, that there ſhould be an union of Heathen and Jewiſh rulers againſt Chriſt, Pſal. ii. 1, 2, compared with Acts iv. 25—28. It was foretold, that the Jews ſhould generally reject and deſpiſe the Meſſiah, Iſa. xlix. 5, 6, 7, and liii. 1—3. Pſal. xxii. 6, 7, and lxix. 4, 8, 19, 20. And it was foretold, that the body of that nation ſhould be rejected in the Meſſiah's days, from being God's people, for their obſtinacy in ſin; Iſa. xlix. 4—7, and viii. 14, 15,

16, compared with Rom. x. 19, and Iſa. lxv. at the beginning, compared with Rom. x. 20, 21. It was foretold, that Chriſt ſhould be rejected by the chief prieſts and rulers among the Jews, Pſal. cxviii. 22, compared with Matt. xxi. 42. Acts iv. 11. 1 Pet. ii. 4, 7.

Chriſt himſelf foretold his being delivered into the hands of the elders, chief prieſts and ſcribes, and his being cruelly treated by them, and condemned to death; and he by them ſhould be *delivered to the Gentiles;* and that he ſhould be *mocked* and *ſcourged* and *crucified*, (Matt. xvi. 21, and xx. 17—19. Luke ix. 22. John viii. 28,) and that the people ſhould be concerned in and conſenting to his death, (Luke xx. 13—18,) eſpecially the inhabitants of Jeruſalem; Luke xiii. 33—35. He foretold, that the diſciples ſhould all be offended becauſe of Him that night that he was betrayed, and ſhould forſake him; Matt. xxvi. 31. John xvi. 32. He foretold, that he ſhould be rejected of that generation, even the body of the people, and that they ſhould continue obſtinate, to their ruin; Matt. xii. 45. xxi. 33—42, and xxii. 1—7. Luke xiii. 16, 21, 24. xvii. 25. xix. 14, 27, 41—44. xx. 13—18, and xxiii. 34—39.

As it was foretold in both Old Teſtament and New, that the Jews ſhould reject the Meſſiah, ſo it was foretold that the Gentiles ſhould receive Him, and ſo be admitted to the privileges of God's people; in places too many to be now particularly mentioned. It was foretold in the Old Teſtament, that the Jews ſhould envy the Gentiles on this account; Deut. xxxii. 21, compared with Rom. x. 19. Chriſt himſelf often foretold, that the Gentiles would embrace the true religion, and become his followers and people; Matt. viii. 10, 11, 12. xxi. 41—43, and xxii. 8—10. Luke xiii. 28. xiv. 16—24, and xx. 16. John x. 16. He alſo foretold the Jews'

envy of the Gentiles on this occaſion; Matt. xx. 12—16. Luke xv. 26, to the end. He foretold, that they ſhould continue in this oppoſition and envy, and ſhould manifeſt it in the cruel perſecutions of his followers, to their utter deſtruction; Matt. xxi. 33—42. xxii. 6, and xxiii. 34—39. Luke xi. 49—51. The Jews obſtinacy is alſo foretold, Acts xxii. 18. Chriſt often foretold the great perſecutions his followers ſhould meet with, both from Jews and Gentiles; Matt. x. 16—18, 21, 22, 34—36, and xxiv. 9, Mark xiii. 9. Luke x. 3. xii. 11, 49—53, and xxi. 12, 16, 17. John xv. 18—21, and xvi. 1—4, 20—22, 23. He foretold the martyrdom of particular perſons; Matt. xx. 23. John xiii. 36, and xxi. 18, 19, 22. He foretold the great ſucceſs of the Goſpel in the city of Samaria, as near approaching; which afterwards was fulfilled by the preaching of Philip, John iv. 35—38. He foretold the riſing of many deceivers after his departure, Matt. xxiv. 4, 5, 11, and the apoſtacy of many of his profeſſed followers; Matt. xxiv. 10—12.

The perſecutions, which the apoſtle Paul was to meet with in the world, were foretold; Acts ix. 16—xx. 23, and xxi. 11. The apoſtle ſays to the Chriſtian Epheſians, Acts xx. 29, 30, *I know that after my departure ſhall grievous wolves enter in among you, not ſparing the flock; alſo of your own ſelves ſhall men ariſe, ſpeaking perverſe things, to draw away diſciples after them.* The apoſtle ſays, *He knew this:* but he did not know it, if God did not know the future actions of moral agents.

4. Unleſs God foreknows the future acts of moral agents, all the prophecies we have in Scripture concerning the great Antichriſtian apoſtacy; the riſe, reign, wicked qualities, and deeds of the *man of ſin*, and his inſtruments and adherents; the extent and

long continuance of his dominion, his influence on the minds of princes and others, to corrupt them, and draw them away to idolatry, and other foul vices; his great and cruel perſecutions; the behaviour of the ſaints under theſe great temptations, &c. &c. I ſay, unleſs the volitions of moral agents are foreſeen, all theſe prophecies are uttered without knowing the things foretold.

The predictions relating to this great apoſtacy are all of a moral nature, relating to men's virtues and vices, and their exerciſes, fruits and conſequences, and events depending on them; and are very particular; and moſt of them often repeated, with many preciſe characteriſtics, deſcriptions, and limitations of qualities, conduct, influence, effects, extent, duration, periods, circumſtances, final iſſue, &c. which it would be very long to mention particularly. And to ſuppoſe all theſe are predicted by God without any certain knowledge of the future moral behaviour of free agents, would be to the utmoſt degree abſurd.

5. Unleſs God foreknows the future acts of men's Wills, and their behaviour as moral agents, all thoſe great things which are foretold in both Old and New Teſtament concerning the erection, eſtabliſhment, and univerſal extent of the *Kingdom* of the *Meſſiah*, were predicted and promiſed while God was in ignorance whether any of theſe things would come to paſs or no, and did but gueſs at them.—For that kingdom is not of this world, it does not conſiſt in things external, but is within men, and conſiſts in the dominion of virtue in their hearts, in righteouſneſs, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghoſt; and in theſe things made manifeſt in practice, to the praiſe and glory of God. The Meſſiah came to *ſave men from their ſins*, and deliver them *from their* ſpiritual *enemies; that they might ſerve him*

in righteouſneſs and holineſs before him: he gave himſelf for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto himſelf a peculiar people, zealous of good works. And therefore his ſucceſs conſiſts in gaining men's hearts to virtue, in their being made *God's willing people in the day of his power.* His conqueſt of his enemies conſiſts in his victory over men's corruptions and vices. And ſuch ſucceſs, ſuch victory, and ſuch a reign and dominion is often expreſsly foretold: that his kingdom *ſhall fill the earth; that all people, nations and languages ſhould ſerve and obey him;* and ſo that *all nations ſhould go up to the mountain of the Houſe of the Lord, that he might teach them his ways, and that they might walk in his paths:* and that *all men ſhould be drawn to Chriſt, and the earth be full of the knowledge of the Lord* (by which, in the ſtyle of Scripture, is meant true virtue and religion) *as the waters cover the ſeas;* that *God's law ſhould be put into men's inward parts, and written in their hearts;* and that *God's people ſhould be all righteous,* &c. &c.

A very great part of the prophecies of the Old Teſtament is taken up in ſuch predictions as theſe. —And here I would obſerve, that the prophecies of the univerſal prevalence of the kingdom of the Meſſiah, and true religion of Jeſus Chriſt, are delivered in the moſt peremptory manner, and confirmed by the oath of God. Iſa. xlv. 22, to the end, *Look to me, and be ye ſaved, all the ends of the earth; for I am God, and there is none elſe. I have SWORN by my Self, the word is gone out of my mouth in righteouſneſs, and ſhall not return, that unto Me every knee ſhall bow; and every tongue ſhall ſwear. SURELY, ſhall one ſay, in the Lord have I righteouſneſs and ſtrength: even to Him ſhall men come,* &c. But here this peremptory declaration, and great oath of the Moſt High, are delivered with ſuch mighty ſolemnity, to things which God did not know, if he did not certainly foreſee the volitions of moral agents.

And all the predictions of Christ and his apostles, to the like purpose, must be without knowledge; as those of our Saviour comparing the kingdom of God to a grain of mustard-seed, growing exceeding great, from a small beginning; and to leaven, hid in three measures of meal, until the whole was leavened, *&c.*—And the prophecies in the epistles concerning the restoration of the nation of the Jews to the true church of God, and the bringing in the fulness of the Gentiles; and the prophecies in all the Revelation concerning the glorious change in the moral state of the world of mankind, attending the destruction of Antichrist, *the kingdoms of the world becoming the kingdoms of our Lord and of his Christ;* and *its being granted to the church to be arrayed in that fine linen, white and clean, which is the righteousness of saints,* &c.

Corol. 1. Hence that great promise and oath of God to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, so much celebrated in Scripture, both in the Old Testament and New, namely, *That in their seed all the nations and families of the earth should be blessed,* must be made on uncertainties, if God does not certainly foreknow the volitions of moral agents. For the fulfillment of this promise consists in that success of Christ in the work of redemption, and that setting up of his spiritual kingdom over the nations of the world, which has been spoken of. Men are *blessed in Christ* no otherwise than as they are brought to acknowledge Him, trust in Him, love and serve Him, as is represented and predicted in Psal. lxxii. 11, *All kings shall fall down before Him; all nations shall serve Him.* With ver. 17, *Men shall be blessed in Him; all nations shall call Him blessed.* This oath to Jacob and Abraham is fulfilled in subduing men's iniquities; as is implied in that of the prophet Micah, chap. vii. 19, 20.

Corol. 2. Hence alſo it appears, that firſt goſpel-promiſe that ever was made to mankind, that great prediction of the ſalvation of the Meſſiah, and his victory over Satan, made to our firſt parents, Gen. iii. 15, if there be no certain preſcience of the volitions of moral agents, muſt have no better foundation than conjecture. For Chriſt's victory over Satan conſiſts in men's being ſaved from ſin, and in the victory of virtue and holineſs, over that vice and wickedneſs, which Satan, by his temptation has introduced, and wherein his kingdom conſiſts.

6. If it be ſo, that God has not a preſcience of the future actions of moral agents, it will follow, that the prophecies of Scripture in *general* are without foreknowledge. For Scripture-prophecies, almoſt all of them, if not univerſally without any exception, are either predictions of the actings and behaviours of moral agents or of events depending on them, or ſome way connected with them; judicial diſpenſations, judgments on men for their wickedneſs, or rewards of virtue and righteouſneſs, remarkable manifeſtations of favour to the righteous or manifeſtations of ſovereign mercy to ſinners, forgiving their iniquities, and magnifying the riches of divine Grace; or diſpenſations of Providence, in ſome reſpect or other, relating to the conduct of the ſubjects of God's moral government, wiſely adapted thereto; either providing for what ſhould be in a future ſtate of things, through the volitions and voluntary actions of moral agents, or conſequent upon them, and regulated and ordered according to them. So that all events that are foretold, are either moral events, or other events which are connected with, and accommodated to moral events.

That the predictions of Scripture in general muſt be without knowledge, if God does not foreſee the volitions of men, will further appear, if it be con-

fidered, that almoft all events belonging to the future ftate of the world of mankind, the changes and revolutions which come to pafs in empires, kingdoms, and nations, and all focieties, depend innumerable ways on the acts of men's Wills: yea, on an innumerable multitude of millions of millions of volitions of mankind. Such is the ftate and courfe of things in the world of mankind, that one fingle event, which appears in itfelf exceeding inconfiderable, may, in the progrefs and feries of things, occafion a fucceffion of the greateft and moft important and extenfive events; caufing the ftate of mankind to be vaftly different from what it would otherwife have been, for all fucceeding generations.

For inftance, the coming into exiftence of thofe particular men, who have been the great conquerors of the world, which, under God, have had the main hand in all the confequent ftate of the world, in all after-ages; fuch as Nebuchadnezzar, Cyrus, Alexander, Pompey, Julius Cæfar, &c. undoubtedly depended on many millions of acts of the Will, which followed, and were occafioned one by another, in their parents. And perhaps moft of thefe volitions depended on millions of volitions of hundreds and thoufands of others, their contemporaries of the fame generation; and moft of thefe on millions of millions of volitions of others in preceding generations. As we go back, ftill the number of volitions, which were fome way the occafion of the event, multiply as the branches of a river, until they come at laft, as it were, to an infinite number. This will not feem ftrange to any one who well confiders the matter; if we recollect what philofophers tell us of the innumerable multitudes of thofe things which are, as it were, the *principia*, or *ftamina vitæ*, concerned in generation; the *animalcula* in *femen mafculo*, and the *ova* in the womb of the female; the im-

pregnation, or animating of one of these in distinction from all the rest, must depend on things infinitely minute, relating to the time and circumstances of the act of the parents, the state of their bodies, *&c.* which must depend on innumerable foregoing circumstances and occurrences; which must depend, infinite ways, on foregoing acts of their Wills; which are occasioned by innumerable things that happen in the course of their lives, in which their own, and their neighbour's behaviour, must have a hand, an infinite number of ways. And as the volitions of others must be so many ways concerned in the conception and birth of such men; so, no less, in their preservation, and circumstances of life, their particular determinations and actions, on which the great revolutions they were the occasions of, depended. As, for instance, when the conspirators in Persia, against the Magi, were consulting about a succession to the empire, it came into the mind of one of them, to propose, that he whose horse neighed first, when they came together the next morning, should be king. Now such a thing's coming into his mind, might depend on innumerable incidents, wherein the volitions of mankind had been concerned. But, in consequence of this accident, Darius, the son of Hystaspes, was king. And if this had not been, probably his successor would not have been the same, and all the circumstances of the Persian empire might have been far otherwise. And then perhaps Alexander might never have conquered that empire. And then probably the circumstances of the world, in all succeeding ages, might have been vastly otherwise. I might further instance in many other occurrences; such as those on which depended Alexander's preservation, in the many critical junctures of his life, wherein a small trifle would have turned the scale against

him; and the preſervation and ſucceſs of the Roman people, in the infancy of their kingdom and commonwealth, and afterwards; which all the ſucceeding changes in their ſtate, and the mighty revolutions that afterwards came to paſs in the habitable world, depended upon. But theſe hints may be ſufficient for every diſcerning conſiderate perſon, to convince him, that the whole ſtate of the world of mankind, in all ages, and the very being of every perſon who has ever lived in it, in every age, ſince the times of the ancient prophets, has depended on more volitions, or acts of the Wills of men, than there are ſands on the ſea-ſhore.

And therefore, unleſs God does moſt exactly and perfectly foreſee the future acts of men's Wills, all the predictions which he ever uttered concerning David, Hezekiah, Joſiah, Nebuchadnezzar, Cyrus, Alexander; concerning the four monarchies, and the revolutions in them; and concerning all the wars, commotions, victories, proſperities and calamities, of any of the kingdoms, nations or communities of the world, have all been without knowledge.

So that, according to this notion of God's not foreſeeing the volitions and free actions of men, God could foreſee nothing appertaining to the ſtate of the world of mankind in future ages; not ſo much as the being of one perſon that ſhould live in it; and could foreknow no events, but only ſuch as He would bring to paſs himſelf by the extraordinary interpoſition of his immediate power; or things which ſhould come to paſs in the natural material world, by the laws of motion, and courſe of nature, wherein that is independent on the actions or works of mankind; that is as he might, like a very able mathematician and aſtronomer, with great exactneſs calculate the revolutions of the heavenly bodies, and the greater wheels of the machine of the external creation.

And if we closely consider the matter, there will appear reason to convince us, that he could not, with any absolute certainty, foresee even these. As to the *first*, namely, things done by the immediate and extraordinary interposition of God's power, these cannot be foreseen, unless it can be foreseen when there shall be occasion for such extraordinary interposition. And that cannot be foreseen, unless the state of the moral world can be foreseen. For whenever God thus interposes, it is with regard to the state of the moral world, requiring such divine interposition. Thus God could not certainly foresee the universal deluge, the calling of Abraham, the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah, the plagues on Egypt, and Israel's redemption out of it, the expelling the seven nations of Canaan, and the bringing Israel into that land; for these all are represented as connected with things belonging to the state of the moral world. Nor can God foreknow the most proper and convenient time of the day of judgment and general conflagration; for that chiefly depends on the course and state of things in the moral world.

Nor, *Secondly*, can we on this supposition reasonably think, that God can certainly foresee what things shall come to pass, in the course of things, in the natural and material world, even those which in an ordinary state of things might be calculated by a good astronomer. For the moral world is the end of the natural world; and the course of things in the former, is undoubtedly subordinate to God's designs with respect to the latter. Therefore he has seen cause, from regard to the state of things in the moral world, extraordinarily to interpose, to interrupt and lay an arrest on the course of things in the natural world; and even in the greater wheels of its motion; even so as to stop the sun in its course.— And unless he can foresee the volitions of men, and

ſo know ſomething of the future ſtate of the moral world, He cannot know but that he may ſtill have as great occaſion to interpoſe in this manner, as ever he had; nor can He foreſee how, or when, He ſhall have occaſion thus to interpoſe.

Corol. 1. It appears from the things which have been obſerved, that unleſs God foreſees the volitions of moral agents, that cannot be true which is obſerved by the apoſtle *James*, Acts xv. 18, *Known unto God are all his works from the beginning of the world.*

Corol. 2. It appears from what has been obſerved, that unleſs God foreknows the volitions of moral agents, all the prophecies of Scripture have no better foundation than mere conjecture; and *that*, in moſt inſtances, a conjecture which muſt have the utmoſt uncertainty; depending on an innumerable, and, as it were, infinite multitude of volitions, which are all, even to God, uncertain events: however, theſe prophecies are delivered as abſolute predictions, and very many of them in the moſt poſitive manner, with aſſeverations; and ſome of them with the moſt ſolemn oaths.

Corol. 3. It alſo follows, from what has been obſerved, that if this notion of God's ignorance of future volitions be true, in vain did Chriſt ſay (after uttering many great and important predictions, concerning God's moral kingdom, and things depending on men's moral actions) Matt. xxiv. 35, *Heaven and earth ſhall paſs away; but my word ſhall not paſs away.*

Corol. 4. From the ſame notion of God's ignorance, it would follow, that in vain has God Himſelf often ſpoke of the predictions of his word, as evidences of foreknowledge; and ſo as evidences of that which is his prerogative as GOD, and his peculiar glory, greatly diſtinguiſhing Him from all other

beings; as in Isa. xli. 22—26. xliii. 9, 10. xliv. 8. xlv. 21. xlvi. 10, and xlviii. 14.

Arg. II. If God does not foreknow the volitions of moral agents, then he did not foreknow the *fall* of man, nor of angels, and so could not foreknow the great things which are *consequent* on these events; such as his sending his Son into the world to die for sinners, and all things pertaining to the great work of redemption; all the things which were done for four thousand years before Christ came, to prepare the way for it; and the incarnation, life, death, resurrection and ascension of Christ; and the setting Him at the head of the universe, as King of heaven and earth, angels and men; and the setting up His church and kingdom in this world, and appointing Him the Judge of the world; and all that Satan should do in the world in opposition to the kingdom of Christ: and the great transactions of the day of judgment, that men and devils shall be the subjects of, and angels concerned in; they are all what God was ignorant of before the fall. And if so, the following Scriptures, and others like them, must be without any meaning, or contrary to truth. Eph. i. 4, *According as he hath chosen us in Him before the foundation of the world.* 1 Pet. i. 20, *Who verily was fore-ordained before the foundation of the world.* 2 Tim. i. 9, *Who hath saved us, and called us with an holy calling; not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began.* So, Eph. iii. 11, (speaking of the wisdom of God in the work of redemption) *according to the eternal purpose which he purposed in Christ Jesus.* Tit. i. 2, *In hope of eternal life, which God that cannot lie, promised before the world began.* Rom. viii. 29, *Whom he did foreknow, them he also did predestinate,* &c. 1 Pet. i. 2, *Elect, according to the foreknowledge of God the Father.*

If God did not foreknow the fall of man, nor the redemption of Jesus Christ, nor the volitions of man since the fall; then he did not foreknow the saints in any sense; neither as particular persons, nor as societies or nations; either by election, or mere foresight of their virtue or good works; or any foresight of any thing about them relating to their salvation; or any benefit they have by Christ, or any manner of concern of their's with a Redeemer.

ARG. III. On the supposition of God's ignorance of the future volitions of free agents, it will follow, that God must in many cases truly *repent* what He has done, so as properly to wish He had done otherwise: by reason that the event of things, in those affairs which are most important, *viz.* the affairs of his moral kingdom, being uncertain and contingent, often happens quite otherwise than he was aware before-hand. And there would be reason to understand, that in the most literal sense, in Gen. vi. 6, *It repented the Lord, that he had made man on the earth, and it grieved him at his heart.* And that, 1 Sam. xv. 11, contrary to that, Numb. xxiii. 19, *God is not the Son of man, that He should repent.* And, 1 Sam. xv. 15, 29, *Also the strength of Israel will not lie, nor repent; for He is not a man that He should repent.* Yea, from this notion it would follow, that God is liable to repent and be grieved at His heart, in a literal sense, continually; and is always exposed to an infinite number of real disappointments in his governing the world; and to manifold, constant, great perplexity and vexation: but this is not very consistent with his title of *God over all, blessed for evermore;* which represents Him as possessed of perfect, constant and uninterrupted tranquility and felicity, as God over the universe, and in his management of the affairs of the world, as supreme and universal Ruler. See Rom. i. 25. ix. 5. 2 Cor. xi. 31. 1 Tim. vi. 15.

Arg. IV. It will alſo follow from this notion, that as God is liable to be continually repenting what he has done; ſo He muſt be expoſed to be conſtantly *changing* his mind and intentions, as to his future conduct; altering his meaſures, relinquiſhing his old deſigns, and forming new ſchemes and projections. For his purpoſes, even as to the main parts of his ſcheme, namely, ſuch as belong to the ſtate of his moral kingdom, muſt be always liable to be broken, through want of foreſight; and he muſt be continually putting his ſyſtem to rights, as it gets out of order, through the contingence of the actions of moral agents; He muſt be a Being, who, inſtead of being abſolutely immutable, muſt neceſſarily be the ſubject of infinitely the moſt numerous acts of repentance, and changes of intention, of any being whatſoever; for this plain reaſon, that his vaſtly extenſive charge comprehends an infinitely greater number of thoſe things which are to Him contingent and uncertain. In ſuch a ſituation, He muſt have little elſe to do, but to mend broken links as well as he can, and be rectifying his disjointed frame and diſordered movements; in the beſt manner the caſe will allow. The Supreme Lord of all things muſt needs be under great and miſerable diſadvantages, in governing the world which he has made and has the care of, through his being utterly unable to find out things of chief importance, which hereafter ſhall befal his ſyſtem; which, if he did but know, He might make ſeaſonable proviſion for. In many caſes, there may be very great neceſſity that He ſhould make proviſion, in the manner of his ordering and diſpoſing things, for ſome great events which are to happen, of vaſt and extenſive influence, and endleſs conſequence to the univerſe; which He may ſee afterwards, when it is too late, and may wiſh in vain that he had known before-hand, that He might have

ordered his affairs accordingly. And it is in the power of man, on these principles, by his devices, purposes and actions, thus to disappoint God, break his measures, make Him continually to change his mind, subject him to vexation, and bring Him into confusion.

But how do these things consist with reason, or with the word of God? Which represents, that *all God's works*, all that He has ever to do, the whole scheme and series of his operations, are *from the beginning* perfectly in his view; and declares, that *whatever devices* and designs *are in the hearts of men, the counsel of the Lord is that which shall stand, and the thoughts of his heart to all generations*, Prov. xix. 21. Psal. xxxiii. 10, 11. *And that which the Lord of Hosts hath purposed, none shall disannul*, Isa. xiv. 27. And that he cannot be frustrated *in one design or thought*, Job xlii. 2. *And that which God doth, it shall be forever, that nothing can be put to it, or taken from it*, Eccl. iii. 14. The stability and perpetuity of God's counsels are expressly spoken of as connected with the foreknowledge of God, Isaiah xlvi. 10. *Declaring the end from the beginning, and from ancient times the things that are not yet done; saying, My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure.*—And how are these things consistent with what the Scripture says of God's immutability, which represents Him as *without variableness*, or *shadow of turning*; and speaks of Him most particularly as unchangeable with regard to his purposes, Mal. iii. 6. *I am the Lord; I change not; therefore ye sons of Jacob are not consumed*, Exod. iii. 14. *I AM THAT I AM*, Job xxiii. 13, 14. *He is in one mind; and who can turn Him? And what his soul desireth, even that he doth: for he performeth the thing that is appointed for me.*

Arg. V. If this notion of God's ignorance of future volitions of moral agents be thoroughly consid-

ered in its consequences, it will appear to follow from it, that God, after he had made the world, was liable to be wholly *frustrated of his end* in the creation of it; and so has been, in like manner, liable to be frustrated of his end in all the great works he hath wrought. It is manifest, the moral world is the end of the natural: the rest of the creation is but an house which God hath built, with furniture, for moral agents: and the good or bad state of the moral world depends on the improvement they make of their natural agency, and so depends on their volitions. And therefore, if these cannot be foreseen by God, because they are contingent, and subject to no kind of necessity, then the affairs of the moral world are liable to go wrong, to any assignable degree; yea, liable to be utterly ruined. As on this scheme, it may well be supposed to be literally said, when mankind, by the abuse of their moral agency, became very corrupt before the flood, *that the Lord repented that he had made man on the earth, and it grieved Him at his heart;* so, when He made the universe, He did not know but that he might be so disappointed in it, that it might grieve Him at his heart that he had made it. It actually proved, that all mankind became sinful, and a very great part of the angels apostatised: and how could God know before-hand, that all of them would not? And how could God know but that all mankind, notwithstanding means used to reclaim them, being still left to the freedom of their own Will, would continue in their apostacy, and grow worse and worse, as they of the old world before the flood did?

According to the scheme I am endeavouring to confute, neither the fall of men or angels, could be foreseen, and God must be greatly disappointed in these events; and so the grand scheme and contrivance for our redemption, and destroying the works

of the devil, by the Meſſiah, and all the great things God has done in the proſecution of theſe deſigns, muſt be only the fruits of his own diſappointment, and contrivances of his to mend and patch up, as well as he could, his ſyſtem, which originally was all very good, and perfectly beautiful; but was marr'd, broken and confounded by the free Will of angels and men. And ſtill he muſt be liable to be totally diſappointed a ſecond time: He could not know, that He ſhould have his deſired ſucceſs, in the incarnation, life, death, reſurrection and exaltation of his only begotten Son, and other great works accompliſhed to reſtore the ſtate of things: He could not know, after all, whether there would actually be any tolerable meaſure of reſtoration; for this depended on the free Will of man. There has been a general great apoſtacy of almoſt all the chriſtian world, to that which was worſe than heatheniſm; which continued for many ages. And how could God, without foreſeeing men's volitions, know whether ever Chriſtendom would return from this apoſtacy? And which way could He tell beforehand how ſoon it would begin? The apoſtle ſays, it began to work in his time; and how could it be known how far it would proceed in that age? Yea, how could it be known that the goſpel, which was not effectual for the reformation of the Jews, would ever be effectual for the turning of the heathen nations from their heathen apoſtacy, which they had been confirmed in for ſo many ages?

It is repreſented often in Scripture, that God, who made the world for Himſelf, and created it for his pleaſure, would infallibly obtain his end in the creation, and in all his works; that as all things are *of* Him, ſo would all be *to* him; and that in the final iſſue of things, it would appear that He is *the firſt, and the laſt*, Rev. xxi. 6. *And he ſaid unto me, It is*

done. I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end, the firſt and the laſt. But theſe things are not conſiſtent with God's being ſo liable to be diſappointed in all his works, nor indeed with his failing of his end in any thing that He has undertaken, or done.

Section XII.

GOD's certain Foreknowledge *of the future volitions of moral agents, inconſiſtent with ſuch a* Contingence *of thoſe volitions, as is without all* Neceſſity.

Having proved, that GOD has a certain and infallible preſcience of the act of the Will of moral agents, I come now, in the *ſecond* place, to ſhew the conſequence; to ſhew how it follows from hence, that theſe events are *neceſſary*, with a Neceſſity of connexion or conſequence.

The chief *Arminian* divines, ſo far as I have had opportunity to obſerve, deny this conſequence; and affirm, that if ſuch Foreknowledge be allowed, it is no evidence of any Neceſſity of the event foreknown. Now I deſire, that this matter may be particularly and thoroughly enquired into. I cannot but think, that on particular and full conſideration, it may be perfectly determined, whether it be indeed ſo, or not.

In order to a proper conſideration of this matter, I would obſerve the following things.

I. It is very evident, with regard to a thing whoſe exiſtence is infallibly and indiſſolubly connected with ſomething which already hath, or has had exiſtence, the exiſtence of that thing is neceſſary. Here may be noted,

1. I obſerved before, in explaining the nature of Neceſſity, that in things which are paſt, their paſt

exiſtence is now neceſſary: having already made ſure of exiſtence, it is too late for any poſſibility of alteration in that reſpect: it is now impoſſible that it ſhould be otherwiſe than true, that that thing has exiſted.

2. If there be any ſuch thing as a divine Foreknowledge of the volitions of free agents, that Foreknowledge, by the ſuppoſition, is a thing which already *has*, and long ago *had* exiſtence; and ſo, now its exiſtence is neceſſary; it is now utterly impoſſible to be otherwiſe, than that this Foreknowledge ſhould be, or ſhould have been.

3. It is alſo very manifeſt, that thoſe things which are indiſſolubly connected with other things that are neceſſary, are themſelves neceſſary. As that propoſition whoſe truth is neceſſarily connected with another propoſition, which is neceſſarily true, is itſelf neceſſarily true. To ſay otherwiſe, would be a contradiction: it would be in effect to ſay, that the connexion was indiſſoluble, and yet was not ſo, but might be broken. If that, whoſe exiſtence is indiſſolubly connected with ſomething, whoſe exiſtence is now neceſſary, is itſelf not neceſſary, then it may *poſſibly not exiſt*, notwithſtanding that indiſſoluble connexion of its exiſtence. Whether the abſurdity be not glaring, let the reader judge.

4. It is no leſs evident, that if there be a full, certain and infallible Foreknowledge of the future exiſtence of the volitions of moral agents, then there is a certain, infallible and indiſſoluble connexion between thoſe events and that Foreknowledge; and that therefore, by the preceding obſervations, thoſe events are neceſſary events; being infallibly and indiſſolubly connected with that, whoſe exiſtence already is, and ſo is now neceſſary, and cannot but have been.

To ſay, the Foreknowledge is certain and infallible, and yet the connexion of the event with that Fore-

knowledge is not indissoluble, but dissoluble and fallible, is very absurd. To affirm it, would be the same thing as to affirm, that there is no necessary connexion between a proposition's being infallibly known to be true, and its being true indeed. So that it is perfectly demonstrable, that if there be any infallible knowledge of future volitions, the event is *necessary;* or, in other words, that it is *impossible* but the event should come to pass. For if it be not impossible but that it may be otherwise, then it is not impossible, but that the proposition which affirms its future coming to pass, may not now be true. But how absurd is that, on the supposition that there is now an infallible knowledge (*i. e.* knowledge which it is impossible should fail) that it is true. There is this absurdity in it that it is not impossible, but that there now should be no truth in that proposition, which is now infallibly known to be true.

II. That no future event can be certainly foreknown, whose existence is contingent, and without all Necessity, may be proved thus: It is impossible for a thing to be certainly known to any intellect without *evidence.* To suppose otherwise, implies a contradiction: because for a thing to be certainly known to any understanding, is for it to be *evident* to that understanding; and for a thing to be *evident* to any understanding is the same thing, as for that understanding to *see evidence* of it: but no understanding, created or increated, can *see evidence* where there is none: for that is the same thing, as to see that to be, which is not. And therefore, if there be any truth which is absolutely without evidence, that truth is absolutely unknowable, insomuch that it implies a contradiction to suppose that it is known.

But if there be any future event, whose existence is contingent, without all Necessity, the future existence of the event is absolutely *without evidence.* If

there be any evidence of it, it muſt be one of theſe two ſorts, either *ſelf-evidence*, or *proof;* for there can be no other ſort of evidence, but one of theſe two; an evident thing muſt be either evident *in itſelf*, or evident *in ſomething elſe;* that is, evident by connexion with ſomething elſe. But a future thing, whoſe exiſtence is without all Neceſſity, can have neither of theſe ſorts of evidence. It cannot be *ſelf-evident:* for if it be, it may be now known, by what is now to be ſeen in the thing itſelf; either its preſent exiſtence, or the Neceſſity of its nature: but both theſe are contrary to the ſuppoſition. It is ſuppoſed, both that the thing has no preſent exiſtence to be ſeen; and alſo that it is not of ſuch a nature as to be neceſſarily exiſtent for the future: ſo that its future exiſtence is not ſelf-evident. And, *ſecondly*, neither is there any *proof*, or evidence *in any thing elſe*, or evidence of connexien with ſomething elſe that is evident; for this is alſo contrary to the ſuppoſition. It is ſuppoſed, that there is now nothing exiſtent with which the future exiſtence of the *contingent* event is connected. For ſuch a connexion deſtroys its *contingence*, and ſuppoſes Neceſſity. Thus it is demonſtrated, that there is in the nature of things abſolutely no evidence at all of the future exiſtence of that event, which is contingent, without all Neceſſity (if any ſuch event there be) neither ſelf-evidence nor proof. And therefore the thing in reality is not evident; and ſo cannot be ſeen to be evident, or, which is the ſame thing, cannot be known.

Let us conſider this in an example. Suppoſe that five thouſand ſeven hundred and ſixty years ago, there was no other being but the Divine Being; and then this world, or ſome particular body or ſpirit, all at once ſtarts out of nothing into being, and takes on itſelf a particular nature and form; all in *abſolute contingence*, without any concern of God, or any

other cause, in the matter; without any manner of ground or reason of its existence; or any dependence upon, or connexion at all with any thing foregoing: I say, that if this be supposed, there was no evidence of that event before-hand. There was no evidence of it to be seen *in the thing itself;* for the thing itself as yet, was not. And there was no evidence of it to be seen *in any thing else;* for *evidence in* something else, is *connexion with* something else: but such connexion is contrary to the supposition.—There was no evidence before, that this thing *would happen;* for by the supposition, there was no reason why *it should happen*, rather than something else, or rather than nothing. And if so, then all things before were exactly equal, and the same, with respect to that and other possible things; there was no preponderation, no superior weight or value; and therefore, nothing that could be of any weight or value; to determine any understanding. The thing was absolutely without evidence, and absolutely unknowable. An increase of understanding, or of the capacity of discerning, has no tendency, and makes no advance, to a discerning any signs or evidences of it, let it be increased never so much; yea, if it be increased infinitely. The increase of the strength of sight may have a tendency to enable to discern the evidence which is far off, and very much hid, and deeply involved in clouds and darkness; but it has no tendency to enable to discern evidence where there is none. If the sight be infinitely strong, and the capacity of discerning infinitely great, it will enable to see all that there is, and to see it perfectly, and with ease; yet it has no tendency at all to enable a being to discern that evidence which is not; but, on the contrary, it has a tendency to enable to discern with great certainty that there is none.

III. To suppose the future volitions of moral a-

gents not to be neceſſary events; or, which is the ſame thing, events which it is not impoſſible but that they may not come to paſs; and yet to ſuppoſe that God certainly foreknows them, and knows all things; is to ſuppoſe God's knowledge to be inconſiſtent with itſelf. For to ſay, that God certainly, and without all conjecture, knows that a thing will infallibly be, which at the ſame time he knows to be ſo *contingent*, that it may poſſibly not be, is to ſuppoſe his knowledge inconſiſtent with itſelf; or that one thing, that he knows, is utterly inconſiſtent with another thing, that he knows. It is the ſame thing as to ſay, he now knows a propoſition to be of certain infallible truth, which he knows to be of contingent uncertain truth. If a future volition is ſo without all Neceſſity, that there is nothing hinders but that it may not be, then the propoſition, which aſſerts its future exiſtence, is ſo uncertain, that there is nothing hinders, but that the truth of it may entirely fail. And if God knows all things, he knows this propoſition to be thus uncertain. And that is inconſiſtent with his knowing that it is infallibly true; and ſo inconſiſtent with his infallibly knowing that it is true. If the thing be indeed contingent, God views it ſo, and judges it to be contingent, if he views things as they are. If the event be not neceſſary, then it is poſſible it may never be: and if it be poſſible it may never be, God knows it may poſſibly never be; and that is to know that the propoſition, which affirms its exiſtence, may poſſibly not be true; and that is to know that the truth of it is uncertain; which ſurely is inconſiſtent with his knowing it as a certain truth. If volitions are in themſelves contingent events, without all Neceſſity, then it is no argument of perefection of knowledge in any being to determine peremptorily that they will be; but on the contrary, an argument of ignorance and miſtake;

becauſe it would argue, that he ſuppoſes that propoſition to be certain, which in its own nature, and all things conſidered, is uncertain and contingent. To ſay, in ſuch a caſe, that God may have ways of knowing contingent events which we cannot conceive of, is ridiculous; as much ſo, as to ſay, that God may know contradictions to be true, for ought we know, or that he may know a thing to be certain, and at the ſame time know it not to be certain, though we cannot conceive how; becauſe he has ways of knowing, which we cannot comprehend.

Corol. 1. From what has been obſerved it is evident, that the abſolute *decrees* of God are no more inconſiſtent with human liberty, on account of any Neceſſity of the event, which follows from ſuch decrees, than the abſolute *Foreknowledge* of God. Becauſe the connexion between the event and certain Foreknowledge, is as infallible and indiſſoluble, as between the event and an abſolute decree. That is, it is no more impoſſible, that the event and decree ſhould not agree together, than that the event and abſolute knowledge ſhould diſagree. The connexion between the event and Foreknowledge is abſolutely perfect, by the ſuppoſition: becauſe it is ſuppoſed, that the certainty and infallibility of the knowledge is abſolutely perfect. And it being ſo, the certainty cannot be increaſed; and therefore the connexion between the knowledge and thing known, cannot be increaſed; ſo that if a decree be added to the Foreknowledge, it does not at all increaſe the connexion, or make it more infallible or indiſſoluble. If it were not ſo, the certainty of knowledge might be increaſed by the addition of a decree; which is contrary to the ſuppoſition, which is, that the knowledge is abſolutely perfect, or perfect to the higheſt poſſible degree.

There is as much of an impoſſibility but that the

things which are infallibly foreknown, ſhould be, or (which is the ſame thing) as great a neceſſity of their future exiſtence, as if the event were already written down, and was known and read by all mankind, through all preceding ages, and there was the moſt indiſſoluble and perfect connexion poſſible, between the writing, and the thing written. In ſuch a caſe, it would be as impoſſible the event ſhould fail of exiſtence, as if it had exiſted already; and a decree cannot make an event ſurer or more neceſſary than this.

And therefore, if there be any ſuch Foreknowledge, as it has been proved there is, then Neceſſity of connexion and conſequence, is not at all inconſiſtent with any liberty which man, or any other creature enjoys. And from hence it may be inferred, that abſolute decrees of God, which does not at all increaſe the Neceſſity, are not at all inconſiſtent with the liberty which man enjoys, on any ſuch account, as that they make the event decreed neceſſary, and render it utterly impoſſible but that it ſhould come to paſs. Therefore, if abſolute decrees are inconſiſtent with man's liberty as a moral agent, or his liberty in a ſtate of probation, or any liberty whatſoever that he enjoys, it is not on account of any Neceſſity which abſolute decrees infer.

Dr. Whitby ſuppoſes, there is a great difference between God's Foreknowledge, and his decrees, with regard to Neceſſity of future events. In his Diſcourſe on the five Points, p. 474, &c. he ſays, "God's preſcience has no influence at all on our "actions:—ſhould God, (ſays he) by immediate "revelation, give me the knowledge of the event of "any man's ſtate or actions, would my knowledge "of them have any influence upon his actions? "Surely none at all. Our knowledge doth not af-"fect the things we know, to make them more cer-

" tain, or more future, than they would be without " it. Now, Foreknowledge in God is knowledge. " As therefore knowledge has no influence on things " that are, ſo neither has Foreknowledge on things " that ſhall be. And conſequently, the Foreknowl- " edge of any action that would be otherwiſe free, " cannot alter or diminiſh that freedom. Whereas " God's decree of election is powerful and active, " and comprehends the preparation and exhibition " of ſuch means, as ſhall unfruſtrably produce the " end. Hence God's preſcience renders no actions " neceſſary." And to this purpoſe, p. 473, he cites Origen, where he ſays, *God's preſcience is not the cauſe of things future, but their being future is the cauſe of God's preſcience that they will be:* and Le Blanc, where he ſays, *This is the trueſt reſolution of this difficulty, that preſcience is not the cauſe that things are future; but their being future is the cauſe they are foreſeen.* In like manner, Dr. Clark, in his Demonſtration of the Being and Attributes of God, p. 95—99. And the author of *the Freedom of Will, in God and the Creature,* ſpeaking to the like purpoſe with Dr. Whitby, repreſents *Foreknowledge as having no more influence on things known, to make them neceſſary,* than *after-knowledge,* or to that purpoſe.

To all which I would ſay, that what is ſaid about knowledge, its not having influence on the thing known to make it neceſſary, is nothing to the purpoſe, nor does it in the leaſt affect the foregoing reaſoning. Whether preſcience be the thing that *makes* the event neceſſary or no, it alters not the caſe. Infallible Foreknowledge may *prove* the Neceſſity of the event foreknown, and yet not be the thing which *cauſes* the Neceſſity. If the Foreknowledge be abſolute, this *proves* the event known to be neceſſary, or proves that it is impoſſible but that the event ſhould be, by ſome means or other, either by a de-

cree, or ſome other way, if there be any other way: becauſe, as was ſaid before, it is abſurd to ſay, that a propoſition is known to be certainly and infallibly true, which yet may poſſibly prove not true.

The whole of the ſeeming force of this evaſion lies in this; that, in as much as certain Foreknowledge does not *cauſe* an event to be neceſſary, as a decree does; therefore it does not *prove* it to be neceſſary, as a decree does. But there is no force in this arguing; for it is built wholly on this ſuppoſition, that nothing can *prove*, or *be an evidence* of a thing's being neceſſary, but that which has *a cauſal influence to make it ſo*. But this can never be maintained. If certain Foreknowledge of the future exiſting of an event, be not the thing, which firſt *makes* it impoſſible that it ſhould fail of exiſtence; yet it may, and certainly does, *demonſtrate*, that it is impoſſible it ſhould fail of it, however that impoſſibility comes. If Foreknowledge be not the cauſe, but the effect of this impoſſibility, it may prove that there is ſuch an impoſſibility, as much as if it were the cauſe. It is as ſtrong arguing from the effect to the cauſe, as from the cauſe to the effect. It is enough, that an exiſtence, which is infallibly foreknown, cannot fail, whether that impoſſibility ariſes from the Foreknowledge, or is prior to it. It is as evident, as it is poſſible any thing ſhould be, that it is impoſſible a thing, which is infallibly known to be true, ſhould prove not to be true: therefore there is a *Neceſſity* that it ſhould be otherwiſe; whether the knowledge be the cauſe of this Neceſſity, or the Neceſſity the cauſe of the knowledge.

All certain knowledge, whether it be Foreknowledge or after-knowledge, or concomitant knowledge, proves the thing known now to be neceſſary, by ſome means or other; or proves that it is impoſſible it ſhould now be otherwiſe than true. I

freely allow, that Foreknowledge does not prove a thing to be neceſſary any more than after-knowledge: but then after-knowledge, which is certain and infallible, proves that it is now become impoſſible but that the propoſition known ſhould be true. Certain after-knowledge, proves that it is now, in the time of the knowledge, by ſome means or other, become impoſſible but that the propoſition, which predicates *paſt* exiſtence on the event, ſhould be true. And ſo does certain Foreknowledge prove, that now, in the time of the knowledge, it is by ſome means or other, become impoſſible but that the propoſition, which predicates *future* exiſtence on the event, ſhould be true. The Neceſſity of the truth of the propoſitions, conſiſting in the preſent impoſſibility of the non-exiſtence of the event affirmed, in both caſes, is the immediate ground of the certainty of the knowledge; there can be no certainty of knowledge without it.

There muſt be a certainty in things themſelves, before they are certainly known, or (which is the ſame thing) known to be certain. For certainty of knowledge is nothing elſe but knowing or diſcerning the certainty there is in the things themſelves, which are known. Therefore there muſt be a certainty in things to be a ground of certainty of knowledge, and to render things capable of being known to be certain. And this is nothing but the Neceſſity of the truth known, or its being impoſſible but that it ſhould be true; or, in other words, the firm and infallible connexion between the ſubject and predicate of the propoſition that contains that truth. All certainty of knowledge conſiſts in the view of the firmneſs of that connexion. So God's certain Foreknowledge of the future exiſtence of any event, is his view of the firm and indiſſoluble connexion of the ſubject and predicate of the propo-

ſition that affirms its future exiſtence. The ſubject is that poſſible event; the predicate is its future exiſting: but if future exiſtence be firmly and indiſſolubly connected with that event, then the future exiſtence of that event is neceſſary. If God certainly knows the future exiſtence of an event which is wholly contingent, and may poſſibly never be, then He ſees a firm connexion between a ſubject and predicate that are not firmly connected; which is a contradiction.

I allow what Dr. Whitby ſays to be true, *That mere knowledge does not affect the thing known, to make it more certain or more future.* But yet, I ſay, it *ſuppoſes* and *proves* the thing to be *already*, both *future*, and *certain*; i. e. neceſſarily future. knowledge of *futurity*, ſuppoſes *futurity*; and a *certain knowledge* of futurity, ſuppoſes *certain futurity*, antecedent to that certain knowledge. But there is no other certain futurity of a thing, antecedent to certainty of knowledge, than a prior impoſſibility but that the thing ſhould prove true; or (which is the ſame thing) the Neceſſity of the event.

I would obſerve one thing further concerning this matter; it is this; that if it be as thoſe forementioned writers ſuppoſe, that God's Foreknowledge is not the cauſe, but the effect of the exiſtence of the event foreknown; this is ſo far from ſhewing that this Foreknowledge doth not infer the Neceſſity of the exiſtence of that event, that it rather ſhews the contrary the more plainly. Becauſe it ſhews the exiſtence of the event to be ſo ſettled and firm, that it is as if it had already been; in as much as *in effect* it actually exiſts already; its future exiſtence has already had actual *influence* and *efficiency*, and has *produced an effect*, viz. Preſcience: the effect exiſts already; and as the effect ſuppoſes, the cauſe is connected with the cauſe, and depends entirely upon it, there-

fore it is as if the future event, which is the cauſe, had exiſted already. The effect is firm as poſſible, it having already the poſſeſſion of exiſtence, and has made ſure of it. But the effect cannot be more firm and ſtable than its cauſe, ground and reaſon. The building cannot be firmer than the foundation.

To illuſtrate this matter, let us ſuppoſe the appearances and images of things in a glaſs; for inſtance, a reflecting teleſcope to be the real effects of heavenly bodies (at a diſtance, and out of ſight) which they reſemble: if it be ſo, then, as theſe images in the teleſcope have had a paſt actual exiſtence, and it is become utterly impoſſible now that it ſhould be otherwiſe than that they have exiſted; ſo they being the true effects of the heavenly bodies they reſemble, this proves the exiſting of thoſe heavenly bodies to be as real, infallible, firm and neceſſary, as the exiſting of theſe effects; the one being connected with, and wholly depending on the other.—Now let us ſuppoſe future exiſtences ſome way or other to have influence back, to produce effects before-hand, and cauſe exact and perfect images of themſelves in a glaſs, a thouſand years before they exiſt, yea, in all preceding ages; but yet that theſe images are real effects of theſe future exiſtences, perfectly dependent on, and connected with their cauſe; theſe effects and images, having already had actual exiſtence, rendering that matter of their exiſting perfectly firm and ſtable, and utterly impoſſible to be otherwiſe; this proves in like manner, as in the other inſtance, that the exiſtence of the things, which are their cauſes, is alſo equally ſure, firm and neceſſary; and that it is alike impoſſible but that they ſhould be, as if they had been already, as their effects have. And if inſtead of images in a glaſs, we ſuppoſe the antecedent effects to be perfect ideas of them in the Divine Mind, which have exiſted

there from all eternity, which are as properly effects, as truly and properly connected with their cauſe, the caſe is not altered.

Another thing which has been ſaid by ſome *Arminians*, to take off the force of what is urged from God's Preſcience, againſt the contingence of the volitions of moral agents, is to this purpoſe: "That "when we talk of Foreknowledge in God, there is "no ſtrict propriety in our ſo ſpeaking; and that "although it be true, that there is in God the moſt "perfect knowledge of all events from eternity to "eternity, yet there is no ſuch thing as *before* and *af-* "*ter* in God, but He ſees all things by one perfect "unchangeable view, without any ſucceſſion."—— To this I anſwer,

1. It has been already ſhewn, that all certain knowledge proves the Neceſſity of the truth known; whether it be *before*, *after*, or *at the ſame time*.—Tho' it be true, that there is no ſucceſſion in God's knowledge, and the manner of his knowledge is to us inconceivable, yet thus much we know concerning it, that there is no event, paſt, preſent, or to come, that God is ever uncertain of; He never is, never was, and never will be without infallible knowledge of it; He always ſees the exiſtence of it to be certain and infallible. And as he always ſees things juſt as they are in truth; hence there never is in reality any thing contingent in ſuch a ſenſe, as that poſſibly it may happen never to exiſt. If, ſtrictly ſpeaking, there is no Foreknowledge in God, it is becauſe thoſe things, which are future to us, are as preſent to God, as if they already had exiſtence: and that is as much as to ſay, that future events are always in God's view as evident, clear, ſure and neceſſary, as if they already were. If there never is a time wherein the exiſtence of the event is not preſent with God, then there never is a time wherein it is

not as much impoſſible for it to fail of exiſtence, as if its exiſtence were preſent, and were already come to paſs.

God's viewing things ſo perfectly and unchangeably as that there is no ſucceſſion in his ideas or judgment, do not hinder but that there is properly now, in the mind of God, a certain and perfect knowledge of moral actions of men, which to us are an hundred years hence: yea the objection ſuppoſes this; and therefore it certainly does not hinder but that, by the foregoing arguments, it is now impoſſible theſe moral actions ſhould not come to paſs.

We know, that God knows the future voluntary actions of men in ſuch a ſenſe before-hand, as that he is able particularly to declare, and foretel them, and write them, or cauſe them to be written down in a book, as He often has done; and that therefore the neceſſary connexion which there is between God's knowledge and the event known, does as much prove the event to be neceſſary before-hand, as if the Divine Knowledge were in the ſame ſenſe before the event, as the prediction or writing is. If the knowledge be infallible, then the expreſſion of it in the written prediction is infallible; that is, there is an infallible connexion between that written prediction and the event. And if ſo, then it is impoſſible it ſhould ever be otherwiſe, than that that prediction and the event ſhould agree: and this is the ſame thing as to ſay, it is impoſſible but that the event ſhould come to paſs: and this is the ſame as to ſay that its coming to paſs is neceſſary.—So that it is manifeſt, that there being no proper ſucceſſion in God's mind, makes no alteration as to the Neceſſity of the exiſtence of the events which God knows. Yea,

2. This is ſo far from weakening the proof, which has been given of the impoſſibility of the not com-

ing to paſs of future events known, as that it eſtabliſhes that, wherein the ſtrength of the foregoing arguments conſiſts, and ſhews the clearneſs of the evidence. For,

(1.) The very reaſon why God's knowledge is without ſucceſſion, is, becauſe it is abſolutely perfect, to the higheſt poſſible degree of clearneſs and certainty: all things, whether paſt, preſent, or to come, being viewed with equal evidence and fulneſs; future things being ſeen with as much clearneſs, as if they were preſent; the view is always in abſolute perfection; and abſolute conſtant perfection admits of no alteration, and ſo no ſucceſſion; the actual exiſtence of the thing known, does not at all increaſe, or add to the clearneſs or certainty of the thing known: God calls the things that are not, as though they were; they are all one to him as if they had already exiſted. But herein conſiſts the ſtrength of the demonſtration before given, of the impoſſibility of the not exiſting of thoſe things, whoſe exiſtence God knows; that it is as impoſſible they ſhould fail of exiſtence, as if they exiſted already. This objection, inſtead of weakening this argument, ſets it in the cleareſt and ſtrongeſt light; for it ſuppoſes it to be ſo indeed, that the exiſtence of future events is in God's view ſo much as if it already had been, that when they come actually to exiſt, it makes not the leaſt alteration or variation in his view or knowledge of them.

(2.) The objection is founded on the *immutability* of God's knowledge: for it is the immutability of knowledge makes his knowledge to be without ſucceſſion. But this moſt directly and plainly demonſtrates the thing I inſiſt on, *viz.* that it is utterly impoſſible the known events ſhould fail of exiſtence. For if that were poſſible, then it would be poſſible for there to be a change in God's knowledge and

view of things. For if the known event ſhould fail of exiſtence, and not come into being, as God expected, then God would ſee it, and ſo would change his mind, and ſee his former miſtake; and thus there would be change and ſucceſſion in his knowledge. But as God is immutable, and ſo it is utterly infinitely impoſſible that his view ſhould be changed; ſo it is, for the ſame reaſon, juſt ſo impoſſible that the fore-known event ſhould not exiſt: and that is to be impoſſible in the higheſt degree: and therefore the contrary is neceſſary. Nothing is more impoſſible than that the immutable God ſhould be changed, by the ſucceſſion of time; who comprehends all things, from eternity to eternity, in one, moſt perfect, and unalterable view; ſo that his whole eternal duration is *vitæ interminabilis, tota, ſimul, & perfecta poſſeſſio.*

On the whole, I need not fear to ſay, that there is no geometrical theorem or propoſition whatſoever, more capable of ſtrict demonſtration, than that God's certain preſcience of the volitions of moral agents is inconſiſtent with ſuch a contingence of theſe events, as is without all Neceſſity; and ſo is inconſiſtent with the *Arminian* notion of liberty.

Corol. 2. Hence the doctrine of the *Calviniſts,* concerning the abſolute decrees of God, does not at all infer any more *fatality* in things, than will demonſtrably follow from the doctrine of moſt *Arminian* divines, who acknowledge God's omniſcience, and univerſal preſcience. Therefore all objections they make againſt the doctrine of the *Calviniſts,* as implying Hobbe's doctrine of Neceſſity, or the *ſtoical* doctrine of *fate,* lie no more againſt the doctrine of *Calviniſts,* than their own doctrine: and therefore it doth not become thoſe divines, to raiſe ſuch an outcry againſt the *Calviniſts,* on this account.

Corol. 3. Hence all arguing from Neceſſity, againſt

the doctrine of the inability of unregenerate men to perform the conditions of ſalvation, and the commands of God requiring ſpiritual duties, and againſt the *Calviniſtic* doctrine of efficacious grace; I ſay, all arguings of *Arminians* (ſuch of them as own God's omniſcience) againſt theſe things, on this ground, that theſe doctrines, though they do not ſuppoſe men to be under any conſtraint or coaction, yet ſuppoſe them under Neceſſity, with reſpect to their moral actions, and thoſe things which are required of them in order to their acceptance with God; and their arguing againſt the Neceſſity of men's volitions, taken from the reaſonableneſs of God's commands, promiſes, and threatenings, and the ſincerity of his counſels and invitations; and all objections againſt any doctrines of the *Calviniſts* as being inconſiſtent with human liberty, becauſe they infer Neceſſity; I ſay, all theſe arguments and objections muſt fall to the ground, and be juſtly eſteemed vain and frivolous, as coming from them; being maintained in an inconſiſtence with themſelves, and in like manner levelled againſt their own doctrine, as againſt the doctrine of the *Calviniſts*.

Section XIII.

Whether we ſuppoſe the volitions of moral agents to be connected with any thing antecedent, or not, yet they muſt be neceſſary in ſuch a ſenſe as to overthrow Arminian *Liberty.*

Every act of the Will has a cauſe, or it has not. If it has a cauſe, then, according to what has already been demonſtrated, it is not contingent, but neceſſary; the effect being neceſſarily dependent and con-

ſequent on its cauſe; and that, let the cauſe be what it will. If the cauſe is the Will itſelf, by antecedent acts chooſing and determining; ſtill the *determined* and *cauſed* act muſt be a neceſſary effect. The act, that is the determined effect of the foregoing act which is its cauſe, cannot prevent the efficiency of its cauſe; but muſt be wholly ſubject to its determination and command, as much as the motions of the hands and feet. The conſequent commanded acts of the Will are as paſſive and as neceſſary, with reſpect to the antecedent determining acts as the parts of the body are to the volitions which determine and command them. And therefore, if all the free acts of the Will are thus, if they are all determined effects, determined by the Will itſelf, that is, determined by antecedent choice, then they are all neceſſary; they are all ſubject to, and deciſively fixed by the foregoing act, which is their cauſe: yea, even the determining act itſelf; for that muſt be determined and fixed by another act, preceding that, if it be a free and voluntary act; and ſo muſt be neceſſary. So that by this all the free acts of the Will are neceſſary, and cannot be free unleſs they are neceſſary: becauſe they cannot be free, according to the *Arminian* notion of freedom, unleſs they are determined by the Will; which is to be determined by antecedent choice; which being their cauſe, proves them neceſſary. And yet they ſay, Neceſſity is utterly inconſiſtent with Liberty. So that, by their ſcheme, the acts of the Will cannot be free, unleſs they are neceſſary, and yet cannot be free if they be not neceſſary!

But if the other part of the dilemma be taken, and if it be affirmed that the free acts of the Will have no cauſe, and are connected with nothing whatſoever that goes before them and determines them, in order to maintain their proper and abſolute

contingence, and this ſhould be allowed to be poſſible; ſtill it will not ſerve their turn. For if the volition come to paſs by perfect contingence, and without any cauſe at all, then it is certain, no act of the Will, no prior act of the ſoul was the cauſe, no determination or choice of the ſoul, had any hand in it. The Will, or the ſoul, was indeed the ſubject of what happened to it accidentaly, but was not the cauſe. The Will is not active in cauſing or determining, but purely the paſſive ſubject; at leaſt, according to their notion of action and paſſion. In this caſe, contingence does as much prevent the determination of the Will, as a proper cauſe; and as to the Will, it was neceſſary, and could be no otherwiſe. For to ſuppoſe that it could have been otherwiſe, if the Will or ſoul had pleaſed, is to ſuppoſe that the act is dependent on ſome prior act of choice or pleaſure; contrary to what is now ſuppoſed: it is to ſuppoſe that it might have been otherwiſe, if its cauſe had made it or ordered it otherwiſe. But this does not agree to its having no cauſe or orderer at all. That muſt be neceſſary as to the ſoul: which is dependent on no free act of the ſoul: but that which is without a cauſe, is dependent on no free act of the ſoul: becauſe, by the ſuppoſition, it is dependent on nothing, and is connected with nothing. In ſuch a caſe, the ſoul is neceſſarily ſubjected to what accident brings to paſs, from time to time, as much as the earth, that is inactive, is neceſſarily ſubjected to what falls upon it. But this does not conſiſt with the *Arminian* notion of Liberty, which is the Will's power of determining itſelf in its own acts, and being wholly active in it, without paſſiveneſs, and without being ſubject to Neceſſity.—Thus, Contingence belongs to the *Arminian* notion of Liberty, and yet is inconſiſtent with it.

I would here obſerve, that the author of the *Eſſay*

on the Freedom of Will, in God and the Creature, page 76, 77, says as follows: "The word *Chance* always "means something done without design. Chance "and design stand in direct opposition to each other: "and chance can never be properly applied to acts "of the Will, which is the spring of all design, and "which designs to choose whatsoever it doth choose, "whether there be any superior fitness in the thing "which it chooses, or no; and it designs to deter- "mine itself to one thing, where two things, perfect- "ly equal, are proposed, merely because it will." But herein it appears a very great inadvertence in this author. For *if the Will be the spring of all design*, as he says, then certainly it is not always the *effect* of design; and the acts of the Will themselves must sometimes come to pass, when they do not *spring from* design; and consequently come to pass by chance, according to his own definition of chance. And if *the Will designs to choose whatsoever it does choose*, and *designs to determine itself*, as he says, then it designs to determine all its designs. Which carries us back from one design to a foregoing design determining that, and to another determining that; and so on *in infinitum*. The very first design must be the effect of foregoing design, or else it must be by chance, in his notion of it.

Here another alternative may be proposed, relating to the connexion of the acts of the Will with something foregoing that is their cause, not much unlike to the other; which is this: either human liberty is such, that it may well stand with volitions being necessarily connected with the views of the understanding, and so is consistent with Necessity; or it is inconsistent with, and contrary to, such a connexion and Necessity. The former is directly subversive of the *Arminian* notion of liberty, consisting in freedom from all Necessity. And if the latter be chosen, and

it be ſaid, that liberty is inconſiſtent with any ſuch neceſſary connexion of volition with foregoing views of the underſtanding, it conſiſting in freedom from any ſuch Neceſſity of the Will as that would imply; then the liberty of the ſoul conſiſts (in part at leaſt) in the freedom from reſtraint, limitation and government, in its actings, by the underſtanding, and in liberty and liableneſs to act contrary to the underſtanding's views and dictates: and conſequently the more the ſoul has of this diſengagedneſs, in its acting, the more liberty. Now let it be conſidered what this brings the noble principle of human liberty to, particularly when it is poſſeſſed and enjoyed in its perfection, *viz.* a full and perfect freedom and liableneſs to act altogether at random, without the leaſt connexion with, or reſtraint or government by, any dictate of reaſon, or any thing whatſoever apprehended, conſidered or viewed by the underſtanding; as being inconſiſtent with the full and perfect ſovereignty of the Will over its own determinations. The notion mankind have conceived of liberty, is ſome dignity or privilege, ſomething worth claiming. But what dignity or privilege is there, in being up to ſuch a wild contingence as this, to be perfectly and conſtantly liable to act unintelligently and unreaſonably, and as much without the guidance of underſtanding, as if we had none, or were as deſtitute of perception, as the ſmoke that is driven by the wind!

PART III.

Wherein is enquired, whether any ſuch liberty of Will as Arminians *hold, be neceſſary to* Moral Agency, Virtue *and* Vice, Praise *and* Dispraise, *&c.*

Section I.

GOD's moral Excellency *neceſſary, yet virtuous and praiſe-worthy.*

Having conſidered the *firſt* thing that was propoſed to be enquired into, relating to that freedom of Will which *Arminians* maintain; namely, Whether any ſuch thing does, ever did, or ever can exiſt, or be conceived of; I come now to the *ſecond* thing propoſed to be the ſubject of enquiry, *viz.* Whether any ſuch kind of liberty be requiſite to moral agency, virtue and vice, praiſe and blame, reward and puniſhment, *&c.*

I ſhall begin with ſome conſideration of the virtue and agency of the ſupreme moral agent, and fountain of all agency and virtue.

Dr. Whitby, in his diſcourſe on the five Points, p. 14, ſays, "If all human actions are neceſſary, "virtue and vice muſt be empty names; we being "capable of nothing that is blame-worthy, or de-"ſerveth praiſe; for who can blame a perſon for "doing only what he could not help, or judge that "he deſerveth praiſe only for what he could not "avoid?" To the like purpoſe he ſpeaks in places

innumerable; eſpecially in his diſcourſe on the *Freedom of the Will;* conſtantly maintaining, that a *freedom not only from coaction, but neceſſity*, is abſolutely requiſite, in order to actions being either worthy of blame, or deſerving of praiſe. And to this agrees, as is well known, the current doctrine of *Arminian* writers, who, in general, hold, that there is no virtue or vice, reward or puniſhment, nothing to be commended or blamed, without this freedom. And yet Dr. Whitby, p. 300, allows, that God is without this freedom; and *Arminians*, ſo far as I have had opportunity to obſerve, generally acknowledge that God is neceſſarily holy, and his Will neceſſarily determined to that which is good.

So that, putting theſe things together, the infinitely holy God, who uſed always to be eſteemed by God's people not only virtuous, but a Being in whom is all poſſible virtue, and every virtue in the moſt abſolute purity and perfection, and in infinitely greater brightneſs and amiableneſs than in any creature; the moſt perfect pattern of virtue, and the fountain from whom all others virtue is but as beams from the ſun; and who has been ſuppoſed to be, on the account of his virtues and holineſs, infinitely more worthy to be eſteemed, loved, honoured, admired, commended, extolled and praiſed, than any creature: and He, who is thus every where repreſented in Scripture; I ſay, this Being, according to this notion of Dr. Whitby, and other *Arminians*, has no virtue at all: virtue, when aſcribed to him, is but *an empty name;* and he is deſerving of no commendation or praiſe: becauſe he is under neceſſity. He cannot avoid being holy and good as he is; therefore no thanks to him for it. It ſeems, the holineſs, juſtice, faithfulneſs, &c. of the Moſt High, muſt not be accounted to be of the nature of that which is virtuous and praiſe-worthy. They will not deny, that theſe things in God are

good ; but then we muſt underſtand them, that they are no more virtuous, or of the nature of any thing commendable, than the good that is in any other being that is not a moral agent ; as the brightneſs of the ſun, and the fertility of the earth, are good, but not virtuous, becauſe theſe properties are neceſſary to theſe bodies, and not the fruit of ſelf-determining power.

There needs no other confutation of this notion of God's not being virtuous or praiſe-worthy, to chriſtians acquainted with the Bible, but only ſtating and particularly repreſenting of it. To bring texts of Scripture, wherein God is repreſented as in every reſpect, in the higheſt manner virtuous, and ſupremely praiſe-worthy, would be endleſs, and is altogether needleſs to ſuch as have been brought up in the light of the goſpel.

It were to be wiſhed, that Dr. Whitby, and other divines of the ſame ſort, had explained themſelves, when they have aſſerted, that *that* which is neceſſary, is *not deſerving of praiſe ;* at the ſame time that they have owned God's perfection to be neceſſary, and ſo in effect repreſenting God as not deſerving praiſe. Certainly, if their words have any meaning at all, by *praiſe*, they muſt mean the exerciſe or teſtimony of ſome ſorts of eſteem, reſpect or honourable regard. And will they then ſay, that men are worthy of that eſteem, reſpect and honour for their virtue, ſmall and imperfect as it is, which yet God is not worthy of, for his infinite righteouſneſs, holineſs and goodneſs ? If ſo, it muſt be, becauſe of ſome ſort of peculiar Excellency in the virtuous man, which is his prerogative, wherein he really has the preference ; ſome dignity, that is entirely diſtinguiſhed from any Excellency, amiableneſs or honourableneſs in God : not in imperfection and dependence, but in pre-eminence : which therefore he does not receive from

God, nor is God the fountain or pattern of it; nor can God, in that reſpect, ſtand in competition with him, as the object of honor and regard; but man may claim a peculiar eſteem, commendation and glory, that God can have no pretenſion to. Yea, God has no right, by virtue of his neceſſary holineſs, to intermeddle with that grateful reſpect and praiſe, due to the virtuous man, who chooſes virtue, in the exerciſe of a freedom *ad utrumque;* any more than a precious ſtone, which cannot avoid being hard and beautiful.

And if it be ſo, let it be explained what that peculiar reſpect is, that is due to the virtuous man, which differs in nature and kind, in ſome way of pre-eminence, from all that is due to God. What is the name or deſcription of that peculiar affection? Is it eſteem, love, admiration, honor, praiſe or gratitude? The Scripture every where repreſents God as the higheſt object of all theſe: there we read of the *ſoul's magnifying the Lord, of loving Him with all the heart, with all the ſoul, with all the mind, and with all the ſtrength; admiring* Him, *and his righteous acts,* or greatly regarding them, as *marvellous and wonderful; honouring, glorifying, exalting, extolling, bleſſing, thanking* and *praiſing* Him; *giving unto Him all the glory* of the good which is done or received, rather than unto men; *that no fleſh ſhould glory in his preſence;* but that He ſhould be regarded as the Being to whom all glory is due. What then is that reſpect? What paſſion, affection or exerciſe is it, that *Arminians* call *praiſe,* diverſe from all theſe things, which men are worthy of for their virtue, and which God is not worthy of, in any degree?

If that neceſſity which attends God's moral perfections and actions, be as inconſiſtent with a Being worthy of praiſe, as a neceſſity of co-action; as is plainly implied in, or inferred from Dr. Whitby's

diſcourſe; then why ſhould we thank God for his goodneſs, any more than if He were forced to be good, or any more than we ſhould thank one of our fellow-creatures who did us good, not freely, and of good will, or from any kindneſs of heart, but from mere compulſion, or extrinſical neceſſity? *Arminians* ſuppoſe, that God is neceſſarily a good and gracious Being: for this they make the ground of ſome of their main arguments againſt many doctrines maintained by *Calviniſts;* they ſay, theſe are *certainly* falſe, and it is *impoſſible* they ſhould be true, becauſe they are not conſiſtent with the goodneſs of God. This ſuppoſes, that it is *impoſſible* but that God ſhould be good: for if it be poſſible that He ſhould be otherwiſe, then that impoſſibility of the truth of theſe doctrines ceaſes, according to their own argument.

The virtue in God is not, in the moſt proper ſenſe, *rewardable*, is not for want of merit in his moral perfections and actions, ſufficient to deſerve rewards from his creatures; but becauſe He is infinitely above all capacity of receiving any reward or benefit from the creature: He is already infinitely and unchangeably happy, and we cannot be profitable unto him. But ſtill he is worthy of our ſupreme benevolence for his virtue; and would be worthy of our beneficence, which is the fruit and expreſſion of benevolence, if our goodneſs could extend to Him. If God deſerves to be thanked and praiſed for his goodneſs, He would, for the ſame reaſon, deſerve that we ſhould alſo *requite* his kindneſs, if that were poſſible. *What ſhall I render to the Lord for all his benefits?* is the natural language of thankfulneſs: and ſo far as in us lies, it is our duty to recompenſe God's goodneſs, and *render again according to benefits received.* And that we might have opportunity for ſo natural an expreſſion of our grat-

itude to God, as beneficence, notwithſtanding his being infinitely above our reach: He has appointed others to be his receivers, and to ſtand in his ſtead, as the objects of our beneficence; ſuch are eſpecially our indigent brethren.

Section II.

The Acts of the Will of the human ſoul of Jesus Christ, neceſſarily holy, *yet truly virtuous, praiſe-worthy, rewardable,* &c.

I have already conſidered how Dr. Whitby inſiſts upon it, that a freedom, not only from coaction, but neceſſity, is *requiſite either to virtue, vice, praiſe or diſpraiſe, reward or puniſhment.* He alſo inſiſts on the ſame freedom as abſolutely requiſite to a perſon's being the ſubject of a *law*, of *precepts* or *prohibitions*; in the book beforementioned, (p. 301, 314, 328, 339, 340, 341, 342, 347, 361, 373, 410.) And of *promiſes* and *threatenings*, (p. 298, 301, 305, 311, 339, 340, 363.) And as requiſite to *a ſtate of trial*, (p. 297, &c.)

Now therefore, with an eye to theſe things, I would inquire into the moral conduct and practices of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, which he exhibited in his human nature here, in his ſtate of humiliation. And *firſt*, I would ſhew, that his holy behaviour was *neceſſary*; or that it was *impoſſible* it ſhould be otherwiſe, than that He ſhould behave himſelf holily, and that he ſhould be perfectly holy in each individual act of his life. And *ſecondly*, that his holy behaviour was properly the nature of *virtue* and was *worthy of praiſe*; and that he was the ſubject of *law*, *precepts* or *commands*, *promiſes* and *rewards*; and that he was *in a ſtate of trial.*

I. It was *impoſſible*, that the acts of the Will of the human ſoul of Chriſt ſhould, in any inſtance, degree or circumſtance, be otherwiſe than holy, and agreeable to God's nature and will. The following things make this evident:

1. God had promiſed ſo effectually to preſerve and uphold Him by his Spirit, under all his temptations, that he could not fail of reaching the end for which He came into the world; which he would have failed of, had he fallen into ſin. We have ſuch a promiſe, Iſai. xliii. 1, 2, 3, 4, *Behold my Servant, whom I uphold; mine Elect, in whom my ſoul delighteth: I have put my Spirit upon him: He ſhall bring forth judgment to the Gentiles: He ſhall not cry, nor lift up, nor cauſe his voice to be heard in the ſtreet.—He ſhall bring forth judgment unto truth. He ſhall not fail nor be diſcourged, till He have ſet judgment in the earth; and the iſles ſhall wait his law.* This promiſe of Chriſt's having God's Spirit put upon Him, and his not crying and lifting up his voice, *&c.* relates to the time of Chriſt's appearance on earth; as is manifeſt from the nature of the promiſe, and alſo the application of it in the New Teſtament, Matthew xii. 18. And the words imply a promiſe of his being ſo upheld by God's Spirit, that he ſhould be preſerved from ſin; particularly from pride and vain-glory, and from being overcome by any of the temptations, he ſhould be under to effect the glory of this world, the pomp of an earthly prince, or the applauſe and praiſe of men: and that he ſhould be ſo upheld, that he ſhould by no means fail of obtaining the end of his coming into the world, of bringing forth judgment unto victory, and eſtabliſhing his kingdom of grace in the earth. And in the following verſes, this promiſe is confirmed, with the greateſt imaginable ſolemnity. *Thus ſaith the LORD, HE that created the heavens, and ſtretched them out; He that ſpread forth the earth, and*

that which cometh out of it; He that giveth breath unto the people upon it, and ſpirit to them that walk therein: I the Lord have called Thee in righteouſneſs, and will hold thine hand; and will keep thee, and give thee for a covenant of the people, for a light of the Gentiles, to open the blind eyes, to bring out the priſoners from the priſon, and them that ſet in darkneſs out of the priſon-houſe. I am JEHOVAH, that is my name, &c.

Very parallel with theſe promiſes is that, Iſai. xlix. 7, 8, 9, which alſo has an apparent reſpect to the time of Chriſt's humiliation on earth. *Thus ſaith the Lord, the Redeemer of Iſrael, and his Holy One, to him whom man deſpiſeth, to him whom the nation abhorreth, to a Servant of the rulers; kings ſhall ſee and ariſe, princes alſo ſhall worſhip; becauſe of the Lord that is faithful, and the Holy One of Iſrael, and he ſhall chooſe Thee. Thus ſaith the Lord, in an acceptable time have I heard Thee; in a day of ſalvation have I helped Thee; and I will preſerve Thee, and give Thee for a covenant of the people, to eſtabliſh the earth*, &c.

And in Iſai. l. 5—6, we have the Meſſiah expreſſing his aſſurance, that God would help Him, by ſo opening his ear, or inclining his heart to God's commendments that He ſhould not be rebellious, but ſhould perſevere, and not apoſtatize, or turn his back; that through God's help, He ſhould be immoveable, in a way of obedience, under the great trials of reproach and ſuffering he ſhould meet with; ſetting his face like a flint: ſo that He knew, He ſhould not be aſhamed, or fruſtrated in his deſign, and finally ſhould be approved and juſtified, as having done his work faithfully. *The Lord hath opened mine ear; ſo that I was not rebellious, neither turned away my back: I gave my back to the ſmiters, and my cheeks to them that plucked off the hair; I hid not my face from ſhame and ſpitting. For the Lord God will help me; therefore ſhall I not be confounded; therefore*

have I ſet my face as a flint, and I know that I ſhall not be aſhamed. He is near that juſtifieth me: who will contend with me? Let us ſtand together. Who is mine adverſary? Let him come near to me: Behold the Lord God will help me: who is he that ſhall condemn me? Lo, they ſhall all wax old as a garment, the moth ſhall eat them up.

2. The ſame thing is evident from all the promiſes which God made to the Meſſiah, of his future glory, kingdom and ſucceſs, in his office and character of a Mediator: which glory could not have been obtained, if his holineſs had failed, and he had been guilty of ſin. God's abſolute promiſe of any things makes the things promiſed *neceſſary*, and their failing to take place abſolutely *impoſſible*: and, in like manner, it makes thoſe things neceſſary, on which the thing promiſed depends, and without which it cannot take effect. Therefore it appears, that it was utterly impoſſible that Chriſt's holineſs ſhould fail, from ſuch abſolute promiſes as thoſe, Pſal. cx. 4, *The Lord hath ſworn, and will not repent, Thou art a Prieſt forever, after the order of Melchizedeck.* And from every other promiſe in that pſalm, contained in each verſe of it. And Pſal. ii. 6, 7, *I will declare the decree: The Lord hath ſaid unto me, Thou art my Son, this day have I begotten Thee: Aſk of me, and I will give Thee the Heathen for thine inheritance,* &c. Pſal. xlv. 3, 4, &c. *Gird thy ſword on thy thigh, O moſt Mighty, with thy Glory and thy Majeſty; and in thy Majeſty ride proſperouſly.* And ſo every thing that is ſaid from thence to the end of the Pſalm. And thoſe promiſes, Iſai. iii. 13, 14, 15, and liii. 10, 11, 12. And all thoſe promiſes which God makes to the Meſſiah, of ſucceſs, dominion and glory in the character of a Redeemer, in Iſai. chap. xlix.

3. It was often promiſed to the Church of God of old, for their comfort, that God would give them a

righteous, ſinleſs Saviour. Jer. xxiii. 5, 6, *Behold, the days come, ſaith the Lord, that I will raiſe up unto David a righteous Branch; and a King ſhall reign and proſper, and ſhall execute judgment and juſtice in the earth. In his days ſhall Judah be ſaved, and Iſrael ſhall dwell ſafely. And this is the name whereby He ſhall be called, The Lord our Righteouſneſs.* So, Jer. xxxiii. 15—*I will cauſe the Branch of Righteouſneſs to grow up unto David; and he ſhall execute judgment and righteouſneſs in the land.* Iſai. ix. 6, 7, *For unto us a Child is born; upon the throne of David and of his kingdom, to order it, and to eſtabliſh it with judgment and juſtice, from henceforth, even for ever: the Zeal of the Lord of Hoſts will do this.* Chap. xi. at the beginning, *There ſhall come forth a Rod out of the Stem of Jeſſe, and a Branch ſhall grow out of his Roots; and the Spirit of the Lord ſhall reſt upon Him—the Spirit of Knowledge, and the Fear of the Lord:—with righteouſneſs ſhall He judge the poor, and reprove with equity:—Righteouſneſs ſhall be the girdle of his loins, and faithfulneſs the girdle of his reins.* Chap. lii. 13, *My Servant ſhall deal prudently.* Chap. liii. 9, *Becauſe He had done no violence, neither was guile found in his mouth.* If it be impoſſible that theſe promiſes ſhould fail, and it be eaſier for heaven and earth to paſs away, than for one jot or title of theſe promiſes of God to paſs away, then it was impoſſible that God ſhould commit any ſin. Chriſt himſelf ſignified, that it was impoſſible but that the things which were ſpoken concerning Him, ſhould be fulfilled. Luke xxiv. 44, *That all things muſt be fulfilled, which were written in the law of Moſes, and in the prophets, and in the Pſalms concerning Me.* Matt. xxvi. 53, 54, *But how then ſhall the Scripture be fulfilled, that thus it muſt be?* Mark xiv. 49, *But the Scriptures muſt be fulfilled.* And ſo the apoſtle, Acts i. 16, 17, *This Scripture muſt needs have been fulfilled.*

4. All the promiſes, which were made to the

Church of old, of the Meſſiah as a future Saviour, from that made to our firſt parents in Paradiſe, to that which was delivered by the prophet Malachi, ſhew it to be impoſſible that Chriſt ſhould not have perſevered in perfect holineſs. The ancient predictions given to God's Church, of the Meſſiah as a Saviour, were of the nature of promiſes; as is evident by the predictions themſelves, and the manner of delivering them. But they are expreſsly, and very often called *promiſes* in the New Teſtament; as in Luke i. 54. 55. 72, 73. Acts xiii. 32, 33. Rom. i. 1, 2, 3, and chap. xv. 8. Heb. vi. 13, &c. Theſe promiſes were often made with great ſolemnity, and confirmed with an oath; as in Gen. xxii. 16, 17, *By myſelf have I ſworn, ſaith the Lord, that in bleſſing, I will bleſs thee, and in multiplying, I will multiply thy ſeed, as the ſtars of heaven, and as the ſand which is upon the ſea-ſhore;—And in thy ſeed ſhall all the nations of the earth be bleſſed.* Compare Luke i. 72, 73, and Gal. iii, 8, 15, 16. The Apoſtle in Heb. vi. 17, 18, ſpeaking of this promiſe to Abraham, ſays, *Wherein God willing more abundantly to ſhew to the heirs of promiſe the immutability of his counſel, confirmed it by an oath; that by two IMMUTABLE things, in which it was IMPOSSIBLE for God to lie, he might have ſtrong conſolation.*—In which words, the *neceſſity* of the accompliſhment, or (which is the ſame thing) the *impoſſibility* of the contrary, is fully declared. So God confirmed the promiſe of the great ſalvation of the Meſſiah, made to David, by an oath; Pſal. lxxxix. 3, 4, *I have made a covenant with my choſen, I have ſworn unto David my ſervant; thy ſeed will I eſtabliſh forever, and build up thy throne to all generations.* There is nothing that is ſo abundantly ſet forth in Scripture, as ſure and irrefragable, as this promiſe and oath to David. See Pſalm lxxxix. 34, 35, 36. 2 Sam. xxiii. 5. Iſai. lv. 4. Acts ii. 29, 30, and xiii,

34. The Scripture expreſsly ſpeaks of it as utterly *impoſſible* that this promiſe and oath to David, concerning the everlaſting dominion of the Meſſiah of his ſeed, ſhould fail. Jer. xxxiii. 15, &c. *In thoſe days, and at that time, I will cauſe the Branch of Righteouſneſs to grow up unto David.—For thus ſaith the Lord, David ſhall never want a Man to ſit upon the throne of the Houſe of Iſrael.*—Ver. 20, 21, *If you can break my covenant of the day, and my covenant of the night, and that there ſhould not be day and night in their ſeaſon; then may alſo my covenant be broken with David my ſervant, that He ſhould not have a ſon to reign upon his throne.* So in ver. 25, 26.—Thus abundant is the Scripture in repreſenting how *impoſſible* it was, that the promiſes made of old concerning the great ſalvation and kingdom of the Meſſiah ſhould fail; which implies, that it was impoſſible that this Meſſiah, the ſecond Adam, the promiſed ſeed of Abraham, and of David, ſhould fall from his integrity, as the firſt Adam did.

5. All the promiſes that were made to the Church of God under the Old Teſtament, of the great enlargement of the Church, and advancement of her glory, in the days of the goſpel, after the coming of the Meſſiah; the increaſe of her light, liberty, holineſs, joy, triumph over her enemies, &c. of which ſo great a part of the Old Teſtament conſiſts; which are repeated ſo often, are ſo variouſly exhibited, ſo frequently introduced with great pomp and ſolemnity, and are ſo abundantly ſealed with typical and ſymbolical repreſentations; I ſay, all theſe promiſes imply, that the Meſſiah ſhould perfect the work of redemption; and this implies, that he ſhould perſevere in the work, which the Father had appointed Him, being in all things conformed to his Will. Theſe promiſes were often confirmed by an oath. (See Iſai. liv. 9, with the context; chap. lxii. 18.)

And it is repreſented as utterly impoſſible that theſe promiſes ſhould fail. (Iſai. xlix. 15, with the context; chap. liv. 10, with the context; chap. li. 4—8; chap. xl. 8, with the context.) And therefore it was *impoſſible* that the Meſſiah ſhould fail, or commit ſin.

6. It was *impoſſible* that the Meſſiah ſhould fail of perſevering in integrity and holineſs, as the firſt Adam did, becauſe this would have been inconſiſtent with the promiſes, which God made to the bleſſed Virgin, his mother, and to her huſband; implying, that *He ſhould ſave his people from their ſins*, that *God would give him the throne of his Father David*, that *He ſhould reign over the houſe of Jacob for ever*; and that *of his kingdom there ſhall be no end*. Theſe promiſes were ſure, and it was *impoſſible* they ſhould fail.—And therefore the Virgin Mary, in truſting fully to them, acted reaſonably, having an immoveable foundation of her faith; as Elizabeth obſerves, ver. 45, *And bleſſed is ſhe that believeth; for there ſhall be a performance of thoſe things, which were told her from the Lord.*

7. That it ſhould have been poſſible that Chriſt ſhould ſin, and ſo fail in the work of our redemption, does not conſiſt with the eternal purpoſe and decree of God, revealed in the Scriptures, that He would provide ſalvation for fallen man in and by Jeſus Chriſt, and that ſalvation ſhould be offered to ſinners through the preaching of the Goſpel. Such an abſolute decree as this, *Arminians* do not deny.—Thus much at leaſt (out of all controverſy) is implied in ſuch Scriptures, as 1 Cor. ii. 7. Eph. i. 4, 5, and chap. iii. 9, 10, 11. 1 Pet. i. 19, 20. Such an abſolute decree as this, *Arminians* allow to be ſignified in theſe texts. And the *Arminians'* election of nations and ſocieties, and general election of the Chriſtian Church, and conditional election of particular perſons, imply this. God could not decree be-

fore the foundation of the world, to save all that should believe in, and obey Christ, unless he had absolutely decreed, that salvation should be provided, and effectually wrought out by Christ. And since (as the *Arminians* themselves strenuously maintain) a decree of God infers *necessity*; hence it became *necessary*, that Christ should persevere, and actually work out salvation for us, and that he should not fail by the commission of sin.

8. That it should have been possible for Christ's holiness to fail, is not consistent with what God promised to his Son, before all ages. For, that salvation should be offered to men, through Christ, and bestowed on all his faithful followers, is what is at least implied in that certain and infallible promise spoken of by the Apostle, Tit. i. 2, *In hope of eternal life; which God, that cannot lie, promised before the world began.* This does not seem to be controverted by *Arminians*.*

9. That it should be possible for Christ to fail of doing his Father's Will, is inconsistent with the promise made to the Father by the Son, by the *Logos* that was with the Father from the beginning, before he took the human nature: as may be seen in Psal. xl. 6, 7, 8, (compared with the Apostle's interpretation, Heb. x. 5—9,) *Sacrifice and offering thou didst not desire: mine ears hast thou opened,* (or bored;) *burnt-offering and sin-offering Thou hast not required. Then said I, Lo, I come: in the volume of the book it is written of me, I delight to do thy Will, O my God, and thy law is within my heart.* Where is a manifest allusion to the covenant, which the willing servant, who loved his master's service, made with his master, to be his servant for ever, on the day wherein he had his ear bored; which covenant was probably inserted in the public records, called the *Volume of the*

* See Dr. Whitby on the five Points, p. 48, 49, 50.

Book, by the judges, who were called to take cognizance of the tranſaction; Exod. xxi. If the *Logos*, who was with the Father, before the world, and who made the world, thus engaged in covenant to do the Will of the Father in the human nature, and the promiſe, was as it were recorded, that it might be made ſure, doubtleſs it was *impoſſible* that it ſhould fail; and ſo it was *impoſſible* that Chriſt ſhould fail of doing the Will of the Father in the human nature.

10. If it was poſſible for Chriſt to have failed of doing the Will of his Father, and ſo to have failed of effectually working out redemption for ſinners, then the ſalvation of all the ſaints, who were ſaved from the beginning of the world, to the death of Chriſt, was not built on a firm foundation. The Meſſiah, and the redemption which he was to work out by his obedience unto death, was the foundation of the ſalvation of all the poſterity of fallen man, that ever were ſaved. Therefore, if when the Old Teſtament ſaints had the pardon of their ſins, and the favour of God promiſed them, and ſalvation beſtowed upon them, ſtill it was poſſible that the Meſſiah, when he came, might commit ſin, then all this was on a foundation that was not firm and ſtable, but liable to fail; ſomething which it was poſſible might never be. God did as it were truſt to what his Son had engaged and promiſed to do in future time; and depended ſo much upon it, that He proceeded actually to ſave men on the account of it, as though it had been already done. But this truſt and dependence of God, on the ſuppoſition of Chriſt's being liable to fail of doing his Will, was leaning on a ſtaff that was weak, and might poſſibly break.—The ſaints of old truſted on the promiſes of a future redemption to be wrought out and completed by the Meſſiah, and built their comfort upon it; Abraham ſaw Chriſt's day, and rejoiced; and he and the other

Patriarchs died in the faith of the promise of it—(Heb. xi. 13.) But on this supposition, their faith and their comfort, and their salvation, was built on a moveable fallible foundation; Christ was not to them a tried stone, a sure foundation: as in Isai. xxviii. 16. David entirely rested on the covenant of God with him, concerning the future glorious dominion and salvation of the Messiah, of his seed; says it was *all his salvation, and all his desire:* and comforts himself that this covenant was an *everlasting covenant, ordered in all things and sure,* 2 Sam. xxiii. 5. But if Christ's virtue might fail, he was mistaken: his great comfort was not built so sure as he thought it was, being founded entirely on the determinations of the Free Will of Christ's human Soul; which was subject to no necessity, and might be determined either one way or the other. Also the dependence of those, who looked for redemption in Jerusalem, and waited for the consolation of Israel, (Luke ii. 25, and 38,) and the confidence of the disciples of Jesus, who forsook all and followed Him, that they might enjoy the benefits of his future kingdom, was built on a sandy foundation.

11. The man Christ Jesus, before he had finished his course of obedience, and while in the midst of temptations and trials, was abundant in positively predicting his own future glory in his kingdom, and the enlargement of his church, the salvation of the Gentiles through Him, &c. and in promises of blessings he would bestow on his true disciples in his future kingdom; on which promises he required the full dependence of his disciples, (John xiv.) But the disciples would have no ground for such dependence, if Christ had been liable to fail in his work: and Christ Himself would have been guilty of presumption, in so abounding in peremptory promises of great things, which depended on a mere con-

tingence, *viz.* the determinations of his Free Will, consisting in a freedom *ad utrumque*, to either sin or holiness, standing in indifference, and incident, in thousands of future instances, to go either one way or the other.

Thus it is evident, that it was *impossible* that the Acts of the Will of the human soul of Christ should be otherwise than holy, and conformed to the Will of the Father; or, in other words, they were necessarily so conformed.

I have been the longer in the proof of this matter, it being a thing denied by some of the greatest *Arminians*, by Episcopius in particular; and because I look upon it as a point clearly and absolutely determining the controversy between *Calvinists* and *Arminians*, concerning the necessity of such a freedom of Will as is insisted on by the latter, in order to moral agency, virtue, command or prohibition, promise or threatening, reward or punishment, praise or dispraise, merit or demerit. I now therefore proceed,

II. To consider whether Christ, in his holy behaviour on earth, was not thus a *moral agent*, subject to *commands*, *promises*, &c.

Dr. Whitby very often speaks of what he calls a freedom *ad utrumlibet*, without necessity, as requisite to *law and commands*; and speaks of necessity as entirely inconsistent with *injunctions and prohibitions*.— But yet we read of Christ's being the subject of the commands of his Father, Job x. 18, and xv. 10.— And Christ tells us, that every thing He *said*, or *did*, was in compliance with *commandments he had received of the Father*; John xii. 49, 50, and xiv. 31. And we often read of Christ's *obedience* to his Father's commands, Rom. v. 19. Phil. ii. 18. Heb. v. 8.

The forementioned writer represents *promises offered as motives* to persons to do their duty, or *a being*

moved and induced by promiſes, as utterly inconſiſtent with a ſtate wherein perſons have not a liberty *ad utrumlibet* but are neceſſarily determined to one.—(See particularly, p. 298, 311.) But the thing which this writer aſſerts, is demonſtrably falſe, if the Chriſtian religion be true. If there be any truth in Chriſtianity or the holy Scriptures, the man Chriſt Jeſus had his Will infallibly, unalterably and unfruſtrably determined to good, and that alone; but yet he had promiſes of glorious rewards made to Him, on condition of his perſevering in, and perfecting the work which God had appointed Him; Iſa. liii. 10, 11, 12. Pſal. ii. and cx. Iſai. xlix. 7, 8, 9. In Luke xxii. 28, 29, Chriſt ſays to his diſciples, *Ye are they which have continued with me in my temptations; and I appoint unto you a kingdom, as my Father hath appointed unto me.* The word moſt properly ſignifies to appoint by covenant, or promiſe. The plain meaning of Chriſt's words is this: "As you have partook of "my temptations and trials, and have been ſtedfaſt, "and have overcome, I promiſe to make you par-"takers of my reward, and to give you a kingdom; "as the Father has promiſed me a kingdom for con-"tinuing ſtedfaſt, and overcoming in thoſe trials." And the words are well explained by thoſe in Rev. iii. 21; *To him that overcometh, will I grant to ſit with me on my throne; even as I alſo overcome, and am ſet down with my Father in his throne.* And Chriſt had not only promiſes of glorious ſucceſs and rewards made to his obedience and ſufferings, but the Scriptures plainly repreſents Him as uſing theſe promiſes for motives and inducements to obey and ſuffer; and particularly that promiſe of a kingdom which the Father had appointed Him, or ſitting with the Father on his throne; as in Heb. xii. 1, 2; *Let us lay aſide every weight, and the ſin which doth eaſily beſet us, and let us run with patience the race that is ſet before*

us, looking unto Jeſus the Author and Finiſher of our faith; who for the joy that was ſet before Him, endured the croſs, deſpiſing the ſhame, and is ſet down on the right hand of the throne of God.

And how ſtrange would it be to hear any chriſtian aſſert, that the holy and excellent temper and behaviour of Jeſus Chriſt, and that obedience, which he performed under ſuch great trials, was not *virtuous* or *praiſe-worthy;* becauſe his Will was not free *ad utrumque*, to either holineſs or ſin, but was unalterably determined to one; that upon this account, there is no virtue at all, in all Chriſt's humility, meekneſs, patience, charity, forgiveneſs of enemies, contempt of the world, heavenly mindedneſs, ſubmiſſion to the will of God, perfect obedience to his commands, (though He was obedient unto death, even the death of the croſs) his great compaſſion to the afflicted, his unparalleled love to mankind, his faithfulneſs to God and man, under ſuch great trials; his praying for his enemies, even when nailing him to the croſs; that *virtue*, when applied to theſe things, *is but an empty name;* that there was no merit in any of theſe things; that is, that Chriſt was *worthy* of nothing at all on account of them, worthy of no reward, no praiſe, no honour or reſpect from God or man; becauſe his Will was not indifferent, and free either to theſe things, or the contrary; but under ſuch a ſtrong inclination or bias to the things that were excellent, as made it *impoſſible* that he ſhould chooſe the contrary; that upon this account (to uſe Dr. Whitby's language) *it would be ſenſibly unreaſonable* that the human nature ſhould be rewarded for any of theſe things.

According to this doctrine, that creature who is evidently ſet forth in ſcripture as the *firſt-born* of *every creature*, as having *in all things the pre-eminence*, and as the higheſt of all creatures in virtue, honour,

and worthineſs of eſteem, praiſe and glory, on the account of his virtue, is leſs worthy of reward or praiſe, than the very leaſt of ſaints; yea, no more worthy than a clock or mere machine, that is purely paſſive, and moved by natural neceſſity.

If we judge by ſcriptural repreſentations of things, we have reaſon to ſuppoſe, that Chriſt took upon him our nature, and dwelt with us in this world, in a ſuffering ſtate, not only to ſatisfy for our ſins, but that He, being in our nature and circumſtances, and under our trials, might be our moſt fit and proper example, leader and captain, in the exerciſe of glorious and victorious virtue, and might be a viſible inſtance of the glorious end and reward of it; that we might ſee in Him the beauty, amiableneſs, and true honour and glory, and exceeding benefit, of that virtue, which it is proper for us human beings to practiſe; and might thereby learn, and be animated, to ſeek the like glory and honour, and to obtain the like glorious reward. See Heb. ii. 9—14, with v. 8, 9, and xii. 1, 2, 3. John xv. 10. Rom. viii. 17. 2 Tim. ii. 11, 12. 1 Pet. ii. 19, 20, and iv. 13. But if there was nothing of any virtue or merit, or worthineſs of any reward, glory, praiſe or commendation at all, in all that He did, becauſe it was all neceſſary, and He could not help it; then how is here any thing ſo proper to animate and excite us, free creatures, by patient continuance in well-doing, to ſeek for honour, glory, and virtue?

God ſpeaks of Himſelf as peculiarly well pleaſed with the righteouſneſs of this ſervant of his. Iſai. xlii. 21, *The Lord is well pleaſed for his righteouſneſs ſake.* The ſacrifices of old are ſpoken of as a ſweet ſavour to God, but the obedience of Chriſt as far more acceptable than they. Pſal. xl. 6, 7, *Sacrifice and offering Thou didſt not deſire:—Mine ear haſt Thou opened* [as thy ſervant performing willing obedience;]

burnt offering and ſin-offering haſt thou not required: then ſaid I, Lo, I come [as a ſervant that cheerfully anſwers the calls of his maſter:] *I delight to do thy will, O my God, and thy law is within mine heart.* Matt. xvii. 5, *This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleaſed.* And Chriſt tells us expreſsly, that the Father loves Him for that wonderful inſtance of his obedience, his voluntary yielding himſelf to death, in compliance with the Father's command. John x. 17, 18, *Therefore doth my Father love me, becauſe I lay down my life:—No man taketh it from me; but I lay it down myſelf—This commandment received I of my Father.*

And if there be no merit in Chriſt's obedience unto death, if it was not worthy of praiſe, and of the moſt glorious rewards, the heavenly hoſts were exceedingly miſtaken, by the account that is given of them, in Rev. v. 8—12—*The four beaſts and the four and twenty elders fell down before the Lamb, having every one of them harps, and golden vials full of odours;—and they ſung a new ſong, ſaying, Thou art WORTHY to take the book, and to open the ſeals thereof; for Thou waſt ſlain.—And I beheld, and I heard the voice of many angels round about the Throne, and the beaſts, and the elders, and the number of them was ten thouſand times ten thouſand, and thouſands of thouſands, ſaying with a loud voice, WORTHY is the Lamb that was ſlain, to receive power, and riches, and wiſdom, and ſtrength, and honour, and glory, and bleſſing.*

Chriſt ſpeaks of the eternal life which He was to receive, as the reward of his obedience to the Father's commandments. John xii. 49, 50, *I have not ſpoken of myſelf; but the Father which ſent me, He gave me a commandment what I ſhould ſay, and what I ſhould ſpeak: and I know that his commandment is life everlaſting: whatſoever I ſpeak therefore, even as the Father ſaid unto me, ſo I ſpeak.*—God promiſes to divide him a

portion with the great, &c. for his being his righteous Servant, for his glorious virtue under ſuch great trials and afflictions. Iſai. liii. 11, 12, *He ſhall ſet the travel of his ſoul and be ſatisfied: by his knowledge ſhall my righteous Servant juſtify me; for he ſhall bear their iniquities. Therefore will I divide him a portion with the great, and he ſhall divide the ſpoil with the ſtrong, becauſe he hath poured out his ſoul unto death.*—The ſcriptures repreſent God as rewarding Him far above all his other ſervants. Phil. ii. 7, 8, 9, *He took on him the form of a ſervant, and was made in the likeneſs of men: and being found in faſhion as a man, He humbled himſelf, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the croſs: wherefore GOD alſo hath highly exalted Him, and given him a Name above every Name.* Pſal. xlv. 7, *Thou loveſt righteouſneſs, and hateſt wickedneſs: therefore God, thy God, hath anointed Thee with the oil of gladneſs above thy fellows.*

There is no room to pretend, that the glorious benefits beſtowed in conſequence of Chriſt's obedience, are not properly of the nature of a reward. What is a reward, in the moſt proper ſenſe, but a benefit beſtowed in conſequence of ſomething morally excellent in quality or behaviour, in teſtimony of well-pleaſedneſs in that moral excellency, and reſpect and favour on that account? If we conſider the nature of a reward moſt ſtrictly, and make the utmoſt of it, and add to the things contained in this deſcription, proper merit or worthineſs, and the beſtowment of the benefit in conſequence of a promiſe; ſtill it will be found, there is nothing belonging to it, but that the ſcripture is moſt expreſs as to its belonging to the glory beſtowed on Chriſt, after his ſufferings; as appears from what has been already obſerved: there was a glorious benefit beſtowed in conſequence of ſomething morally excellent, being called *Righteouſneſs* and *Obedience*; there was great

favour, love and well-pleaſedneſs, for this righteouſneſs and obedience, in the beſtower; there was proper merit, or worthineſs of the benefit, in the obedience; it was beſtowed in fulfilment of promiſes, made to that obedience; and was beſtowed *therefore*, or *becauſe* he had performed that obedience.

I may add to all theſe things, that Jeſus Chriſt, while here in the fleſh, was manifeſtly in a ſtate of trial. The laſt Adam, as Chriſt is called, 1 Cor. xv. 45. Rom. v. 14, taking on Him the human nature, and ſo the form of a ſervant, and being under the law, to ſtand and act for us, was put into a ſtate of trial, as the firſt Adam was.—Dr. Whitby mentions theſe three things as evidences of perſons being in a ſtate of trial (on the five Points, p. 298, 299,) namely, their afflictions being ſpoken of as their trials or temptations, their being the ſubjects of promiſes, and their being expoſed to Satan's temptations. But Chriſt was apparently the ſubject of each of theſe. Concerning promiſes made to Him, I have ſpoken already. The difficulties and *afflictions* He met with in the courſe of his obedience, are called his *temptations* or *trials*. Luke xxii. 28, *Ye are they which have continued with me in my* temptations, *or* trials. Heb. ii. 18, *For in that he Himſelf hath ſuffered, being* tempted [or tried] *He is able to ſuccour them that are tempted.* And chap. iv. 15, *We have not an high-prieſt, which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points* tempted *like as we are, yet without ſin.* And as to his being tempted by Satan it is what none will diſpute.

Section III.

The Case of such as are given up of God to Sin, *and of* fallen Man *in general, proves moral Necessity and Inability to be consistent with blame-worthiness.*

Dr. Whitby asserts freedom, not only from coaction, but Necessity, to be essential to any thing deserving the name of Sin, and to an action's being *culpable:* in these words (Discourse on the five Points, edit. 3, p. 348.) "If they be thus necessitated, then "neither their Sins of omission or commission could "deserve that name; it being essential to the nature "of Sin, according to St. Austin's definition, that it "be an action *a quo liberum est abstinere.* Three "things seem plainly necessary to make an action "or omission culpable: 1. That it be in our power "to perform or forbear it: for, as Origen, and all "the Fathers say, no man is blame-worthy for not "doing what he could not do." And elsewhere the Doctor insists, that "when any do evil of Ne-"cessity, what they do is no vice, that they are guil-"ty of no fault,* are worthy of no blame, dispraise,† "or dishonor,‡ but are unblamable."§

If these things are true, in Dr. Whitby's sense of Necessity, they will prove all such to be blameless, who are given up of God to Sin, in what they commit after they are thus given up. That there is such a thing as men's being judicially given up to Sin is certain, if the Scripture rightly informs us; such a thing being often there spoken of; as in Psal. lxxxi. 12, *So I gave them up to their own hearts' lusts, and they walked in their own counsels.* Acts vii. 42, *Then God*

* Discourse on the five Points, p. 347, 360, 361, 377. † 303, 326, 329, and many other places. ‡ 371. § 304, 361.

turned, and gave them up to worſhip the hoſt of heaven. Rom. i. 24, *Wherefore, God alſo gave them up to uncleanneſs, through the luſts of their own hearts, to diſhonor their own bodies between themſelves.* Ver. 26, *For this cauſe God gave them up to vile affections.* Ver. 28, *And even as they did not like to retain God in their knowledge, God gave them over to a reprobate mind, to do thoſe things that are not convenient.*

It is needleſs to ſtand particularly to enquire, what God's *giving men up to their own hearts' luſts* ſignifies: it is ſufficient to obſerve, that hereby is certainly meant God's ſo ordering or diſpoſing things, in ſome reſpect or other, either by doing or forbearing to do, as that the conſequence ſhould be men's continuing in their Sins. So much as men are given up *to*, ſo much is the conſequence of their being given up, whether that be leſs or more. If God does not order things ſo, by action or permiſſion, that Sin will be the conſequence, then the event proves that they are not given up to that conſequence. If good be the conſequence, inſtead of evil, then God's mercy is to be acknowledged in that good; which mercy muſt be contrary to God's judgment in giving up to evil. If the event muſt prove, that they are given up to evil as the conſequence, then the perſons, who are the ſubjects of this judgment, muſt be the ſubjects of ſuch an event, and ſo the event is neceſſary.

If not only *coaction*, but all *Neceſſity*, will prove men blameleſs, then Judas was blameleſs, after Chriſt had given him over, and had already declared his certain damnation, and that he ſhould *verily* betray Him. He was guilty of no Sin in betraying his Maſter, on this ſuppoſition; though his ſo doing is ſpoken of by Chriſt as the moſt aggravated Sin, more heinious than the Sin of Pilate in crucifying Him. And the Jews in Egypt, in Jeremiah's time,

were guilty of no Sin, in their not worſhipping the true God, after God had *ſworn by his great Name, that his Name ſhould be no more named in the mouth of any man of Judah, in all the land of Egypt*—Jer. xliv. 26.

Dr. Whitby (Diſcourſe on five Points, p. 302, 303,) denies, that men, in this world, are ever ſo given up by God to Sin, that their Wills ſhould be neceſſarily determined to evil; though he owns, that hereby it may become *exceeding difficult* for men to do good, having a ſtrong bent, and powerful inclination, to what is evil.—But if we ſhould allow the caſe to be juſt as he repreſents, the judgment of giving up to Sin will no better agree with his notions of that liberty, which is eſſential to praiſe or blame, than if we ſhould ſuppoſe it to render the avoiding of Sin *impoſſible*. For if an *impoſſibility* of avoiding Sin wholly excuſes a man; then, for the ſame reaſon, its being difficult to avoid it, excuſes him in part; and this juſt in proportion to the degree of difficulty.—If the influence of *moral* impoſſibility or Inability be the ſame, to excuſe perſons in not doing, or not avoiding any thing, as that of *natural* Inability, (which is ſuppoſed) then undoubtedly, in like manner, *moral difficulty* has the ſame influence to excuſe with *natural difficulty*. But all allow, that natural impoſſibility wholly excuſes, and alſo that *natural difficulty* excuſes in part, and makes the act or omiſſion leſs blameable in proportion to the difficulty. All *natural difficulty* according to the plaineſt dictates of the light of nature, excuſes in ſome degree, ſo that the neglect is not ſo blameable, as if there had been no difficulty in the caſe: and ſo the greater the difficulty is, ſtill the more excuſeable, in proportion to the increaſe of the difficulty. And as *natural* impoſſibility wholly excuſes and excludes all blame, ſo the nearer the difficulty approaches to impoſſibility, ſtill the nearer a perſon is to blameleſſ-

neſs in proportion to that approach. And if the caſe of moral impoſſibility or Neceſſity, be juſt the ſame with natural Neceſſity or coaction, as to influence to excuſe a neglect, then alſo, for the ſame reaſon, the caſe of natural difficulty, does not differ in influence, to excuſe a neglect, from moral difficulty, ariſing from a ſtrong bias or bent to evil, ſuch as Dr. Whitby owns in the caſe of thoſe that are given up to their own hearts' luſts. So that the fault of ſuch perſons muſt be leſſened, in proportion to the difficulty, and approach to impoſſibility. If ten degrees of moral difficulty make the action quite impoſſible, and ſo wholly excuſe, then if there be nine degrees of difficulty, the perſon is in great part excuſed, and is nine degrees in ten, leſs blame-worthy, than if there had been no difficulty at all; and he has but one degree of blame-worthineſs. The reaſon is plain, on *Arminian* principles, *viz.* becauſe as difficulty, by antecedent bent and bias on the Will, is increaſed, liberty of indifference, and ſelf-determination in the Will, is diminiſhed; ſo much hindrance and impediment is there, in the way of the Will's acting freely, by mere ſelf-determination. And if ten degrees of ſuch hindrance take away all ſuch liberty, then nine degrees take away nine parts in ten, and leave but one degree of liberty. And therefore there is but one degree of blameableneſs, *cæteris paribus*, in the neglect; the man being no further blameable in what he does, or neglects, than he has liberty in that affair: for blame or praiſe (ſay they) ariſes wholly from a good uſe or abuſe of liberty.

From all which it follows, that a ſtrong bent and bias one way, and difficulty of going the contrary, never cauſes a perſon to be at all more expoſed to Sin, or any thing blameable: becauſe, as the difficulty is increaſed, ſo much the leſs is required and

expected. Though in one respect, exposedness to Sin or fault is increased, *viz.* by an increase of exposedness to the evil action or omission; yet it is diminished in another respect, to balance it; namely, as the sinfulness or blameableness of the action or omission is diminished in the same proportion. So that, on the whole, the affair, as to exposedness to guilt or blame, is left just as it was.

To illustrate this, let us suppose a scale of a balance to be intelligent, and a free agent, and induced with a self-moving power, by virtue of which it could act and produce effects to a certain degree, *ex. gr.* to move itself up or down with a force equal to a weight of ten pounds; and that it might therefore be required of it, in ordinary circumstances, to move itself down with that force; for which it has power and full liberty, and therefore would be blameworthy if it failed of it. But then let us suppose a weight of ten pounds to be put in the opposite scale, which in force entirely counter-balance its self-moving power, and so renders it impossible for it to move down at all; and therefore wholly excuses it from any such motion. But if we suppose there to be only nine pounds in the opposite scale, this renders its motion not impossible, but yet more difficult: so that it can now only move down with the force of one pound: but however, this is all that is required of it under these circumstances; it is wholly excused from nine parts of its motion: and if the scale, under these circumstances, neglects to move, and remains at rest, all that it will be blamed for, will be its neglect of that one tenth part of its motion; which it had as much liberty and advantage for, as in usual circumstances, it has for the greater motion, which in such a case would be required. So that this new difficulty, does not at all increase its exposedness to any thing blame-worthy.

And thus the very ſuppoſition of difficulty in the way of a man's *duty*, or proclivity to Sin, through a being given up to hardneſs of heart, or indeed by any other means whatſoever, is an inconſiſtence, according to Dr. Whitby's notions of liberty, virtue and vice, blame and praiſe. The avoiding Sin and blame, and the doing what is virtuous and praiſe-worthy, muſt be always equally eaſy.

Dr. Whitby's notions of liberty, obligation, virtue, Sin, *&c.* led him into another great inconſiſtence. He abundantly inſiſts, that neceſſity is inconſiſtent with the nature of Sin or fault. He ſays, in the forementioned treatiſe, p. 14. *Who can blame a perſon for doing what he could not help?* and p. 15, *It being ſenſibly unjuſt, to puniſh any man for doing that which was never in his power to avoid.* And in p. 341, to confirm his opinion, he quotes one of the Fathers, ſaying, *Why doth God command, if man hath not free Will and power to obey?* And again in the ſame and the next page, *Who will not cry out, that it is folly to command him, that hath not liberty to do what is commanded; and that it is unjuſt to condemn him, that has it not in his power to do what is required?* And in p. 373, he cites another ſaying, *A law is given to him that can turn to both parts*, i. e. *obey or tranſgreſs it: but no law can be againſt him who is bound by nature.*

And yet the ſame Dr. Whitby aſſerts, that fallen Man is not able to perform perfect obedience. In p. 165, he has theſe words: "The nature of Adam "had power to continue innocent, and without Sin; "whereas, it is certain our nature never had ſo."— But if we have not power to continue innocent and without Sin, then Sin is inconſiſtent with Neceſſity, and we may be ſinful in that which we have not power to avoid; and thoſe things cannot be true which he aſſerts elſewhere, namely, "That if we be "neceſſitated, neither Sins of omiſſion nor commiſ-

" ſion, would deſerve that name," (p. 348.) If we have it not in our power to be innocent, then we have it not in our power to be blameleſs: and if ſo, we are under a Neceſſity of being blame-worthy.— And how does this conſiſt with what he ſo often aſſerts, that Neceſſity is inconſiſtent with blame or praiſe? If we have it not in our power to perform perfect obedience, to all the commands of God, then we are under a Neceſſity of breaking ſome commands, in ſome degree; having no power to perform ſo much as is commanded. And if ſo, why does he cry out of the unreaſonableneſs and folly of commanding beyond what men have power to do?

And *Arminians* in general are very inconſiſtent with themſelves in what they ſay of the Inability of fallen Man in this reſpect. They ſtrenuouſly maintain, that it would be unjuſt in God, to require any thing of us beyond our preſent power and ability to perform; and alſo hold, that we are now unable to perform perfect obedience, and that Chriſt died to ſatisfy for the *imperfections of our obedience*, and has made way, that our imperfect obedience might be accepted inſtead of perfect: wherein they ſeem inſenſibly to run themſelves into the groſſeſt inconſiſtence. For, (as I have obſerved elſewhere) "they " hold, that God, in mercy to mankind, has aboliſh- " ed that rigorous conſtitution or law, that they were " under originally; and inſtead of it, has introduc- " ed a more mild conſtitution, and put us under a " new law, which requires no more than imperfect " ſincere obedience, in compliance with our poor " infirm impotent circumſtances ſince the fall."

Now, how can theſe things be made conſiſtent? I would aſk, what law theſe imperfections of our obedience are a breach of? If they are a breach of no law, that we were ever under, then they are not Sins. And if they be not Sins, what need of Chriſt's

dying to satisfy for them ? But if they are Sins, and and the breach of some law, what law is it ? they cannot be a breach of their new law ; for that requires no other than imperfect obedience, or obedience with imperfections : and therefore to have obedience attended with imperfections, is no breach of it ; for it is as much as it requires. And they cannot be a breach of their old law ; for that, they say, is entirely abolished ; and we never were under it. They say, it would not be just in God to require of us perfect obedience, because it would not be just to require more than we can perform, or to punish us for failing of it. And therefore, by their own scheme, the imperfections of our obedience do not deserve to be punished. What need therefore of Christ's dying, to satisfy for them ? What need of his *suffering* to satisfy for that which is no fault, and in its own nature deserves no *suffering ?* What need of Christ's dying, to purchase, that our *imperfect* obedience should be accepted, when, according to their scheme, it would be unjust in itself, that any other obedience, than *imperfect* should be required ? What need of Christ's dying to make way for God's accepting such an obedience, as it would be unjust in Him not to accept ? Is there any need of Christ's dying, to prevail with God not to do unrighteously ?--If it be said, that Christ died to satisfy that old law for us, that so we might not be under it, but that there might be room for our being under a more mild law ; still I would inquire, what need of Christ's dying, that we might not be under a law, which (by their principles) it would be in itself unjust that we should be under, whether Christ had died or no, because, in our present state, we are not able to keep it ?

So the *Arminians* are inconsistent with themselves, not only in what they say of the need of Christ's satisfaction to atone for those imperfections, which

we cannot avoid, but alſo in what they ſay of the grace of God, granted to enable men to perform the ſincere obedience of the new law. "I grant (ſays "Dr. Stebbing*) indeed, that by reaſon of original "Sin, we are utterly diſabled for the performance "of the condition, without new grace from God. "But I ſay then, that he gives ſuch a grace to all of "us, by which the performance of the condition is "truly poſſible: and upon this ground he may, and "doth moſt righteouſly require it." If Dr. Stebbing intends to ſpeak properly, by *grace* he muſt mean, that aſſiſtance which is of grace, or of free favour and kindneſs. But yet in the ſame place he ſpeaks of it as very *unreaſonable*, *unjuſt* and *cruel*, for God to require that, as the condition of pardon, that is become impoſſible by original Sin. If it be ſo, what *grace* is there in giving aſſiſtance and ability to perform the condition of pardon? Or why is that called by the name of grace, that is an abſolute debt, which God is bound to beſtow, and which it would be unjuſt and cruel in Him to withhold, ſeeing he requires that, *as the condition of pardon*, which he cannot perform without it.

Section IV.

Command *and* Obligation *to* Obedience, *conſiſtent with moral Inability to obey.*

It being ſo much inſiſted on by *Arminian* writers, that neceſſity is inconſiſtent with Law or Command, and particularly, that it is abſurd to ſuppoſe God by his Command ſhould require that of men which

* Treatiſe of the Operations of the Spirit. 2 edit. p. 112, 113.

they are unable to do; not allowing in this caſe for any difference that there is between natural and moral Inability; I would therefore now particularly conſider this matter.

And, for the greater clearneſs, I would diſtinctly lay down the following things.

I. The Will itſelf, and not only thoſe actions which are the effects of the Will, is the proper object of precept or Command. This is, ſuch or ſuch a ſtate or acts of men's Wills, is in many caſes, properly required of them by Commands; and not only thoſe alterations in the ſtate of their bodies or minds that are the conſequences of volition. This is moſt manifeſt; for it is the ſoul only that is properly and directly the ſubject of precepts or Commands; that only being capable of receiving or perceiving Commands. The motions or ſtate of the body are matter of Command, only as they are ſubject to the ſoul, and connected with its acts. But now the ſoul has no other faculty whereby it can, in the moſt direct and proper ſenſe, conſent, yield to, or comply with any Command, but the faculty of the Will; and it is by this faculty only, that the ſoul can directly diſobey, or refuſe compliance: for the very notions of *conſenting*, *yielding*, *accepting*, *complying*, *refuſing*, *rejecting*, &c. are, according to the meaning of the terms, nothing but certain acts of the Will. Obedience, in the primary nature of it, is the ſubmitting and yielding of the Will of one to the Will of another. Diſobedience is the not conſenting, not complying of the Will of the commanded to the manifeſted Will of the commander. Other acts that are not the acts of the Will, as certain motions of the body and alterations in the ſoul, are Obedience or Diſobedience only indirectly, as they are connected with the ſtate or actions of the Will, according to an eſtabliſhed law of nature. So that it is manifeſt, the Will itſelf

may be required: and the being of a good Will is the moſt proper, direct and immediate ſubject of Command; and if this cannot be preſcribed or required by Command or precept, nothing can; for other things can be required no otherwiſe than as they depend upon, and are the fruits of a good Will.

Corol. 1. If there be ſeveral acts of the Will, or a ſeries of acts, one following another, and one the effect of another, the *firſt and determining act* is properly the ſubject of Command, and not only the conſequent acts, which are dependent upon it. Yea, it is this more eſpecially, which is that, which Command or precept has a proper reſpect to; becauſe it is this act that determines the whole affair: in this act the Obedience or Diſobedience lies, in a peculiar manner; the conſequent acts being all ſubject to it, and governed and determined by it. This determining governing act muſt be the proper object of precept, or none.

Corol. 2. It alſo follows, from what has been obſerved, that if there be any ſort of act, or exertion of the ſoul, prior to all free acts of the Will or acts of choice in the caſe, directing and determining, what the acts of the Will ſhall be; that act or exertion of the ſoul cannot properly be ſubject to any Command or precept, in any reſpect whatſoever, either directly or indirectly, immediately or remotely. Such acts cannot be ſubject to Commands *directly*, becauſe they are no acts of the Will; being by the ſuppoſition prior to all acts of the Will, determining and giving riſe to all its acts: they not being acts of the Will, there can be in them no conſent to, or compliance with, any command. Neither can they be ſubject to Command or precept *indirectly* or *remotely*; for they are not ſo much as the *effects* or *conſequences* of the Will, being prior to all its acts. So that if there be any Obedience in that original act of the ſoul, determining all volitions, it is an act of Obedience

wherein the Will has no concern at all ; it preceding every act of Will. And therefore, if the ſoul either obeys or diſobeys in this act, it is wholly involuntarily ; there is no willing Obedience or rebellion, no compliance or oppoſition of the Will in the affair : and what ſort of Obedience or rebellion is this ?

And thus the *Arminian* notion of the freedom of the Will conſiſting in the ſoul's determining its own acts of Will, inſtead of being eſſential to moral agency, and to men's being the ſubjects of moral government, is utterly inconſiſtent with it. For if the ſoul determines *all* its acts of Will, it is therein ſubject to no Command or moral government, as has been now obſerved ; becauſe its original determining act is no act of Will or choice, it being prior, by the ſuppoſition, to *every act* of Will. And the ſoul cannot be the ſubject of Command in the act of the Will itſelf, which depends on the foregoing determining act, and is determined by it ; in as much as this is neceſſary, being the neceſſary conſequence and effect of that prior determining act, which is not voluntary. Nor can the man be the ſubject of Command or government in his external actions ; becauſe theſe are all neceſſary, being the neceſſary effects of the acts of the Will themſelves. So that mankind, according to this ſcheme, are ſubjects of Command or moral government in nothing at all ; and all their moral agency is entirely excluded, and no room for virtue or vice in the world.

So that it is the *Arminian* ſcheme, and not the ſcheme of the *Calviniſts*, that is utterly inconſiſtent with moral government, and with all the uſe of laws, precepts, prohibitions, promiſes or threatenings. Neither is there any way whatſoever to make their principles conſiſt with theſe things. For if it be ſaid, that there is no prior determining act of the ſoul,

preceding the acts of the Will, but that volitions are events that come to paſs by pure accident, without any determining cauſe, this is moſt palpably inconſiſtent with all uſe of laws and precepts; for nothing is more plain than that laws can be of no uſe to direct and regulate perfect accident: which, by the ſuppoſition of its being pure accident, is in no caſe regulated by any thing preceding; but happens, this way or that, perfectly by chance, without any cauſe or rule. The perfect uſeleſſneſs of laws and precepts alſo follows from the *Arminian* notion of indifference, as eſſential to that liberty, which is requiſite to virtue or vice. For the end of laws is to *bind to one ſide;* and the end of Commands is to turn the Will one way: and therefore they are of no uſe, unleſs they turn or bias the Will that way. But if liberty conſiſts in indifference, then their biaſing the Will one way only, deſtroys liberty; as it puts the Will out of equilibrium. So that the Will, having a bias, through the influence of binding law, laid upon it, is not wholly left to itſelf, to determine itſelf which way it will, without influence from without.

II. Having ſhewn that the Will itſelf, eſpecially in thoſe acts, which are original, leading and determining in any caſe, is the proper ſubject of precept and Command, and not only thoſe alterations in the body, *&c.* which are the effects of the Will; I now proceed, in the *ſecond* place, to obſerve that the very oppoſition or defect of the Will itſelf, in that act, which is its *original and determining act* in the caſe; I ſay, the Will's oppoſition *in this act* to a thing propoſed or commanded, or its failing of compliance, implies a moral Inability to that thing: or, in other words, whenever a Command requires a certain ſtate or act of the Will, and the perſon commanded, notwithſtanding the Command and the circumſtances

under which it is exhibited, ſtill finds his Will oppoſite or wanting, in *that*, belonging to its ſtate or acts, *which is original and determining in the affair*, that man is morally unable to obey that Command.

This is manifeſt from what was obſerved in the firſt part, concerning the nature of *moral* Inability, as diſtinguiſhed from *natural;* where it was obſerved, that a man may then be ſaid to be morally unable to do a thing, when he is under the influence or prevalence of a contrary inclination, or has a want of inclination, under ſuch circumſtances and views. It is alſo evident, from what has been before proved, that the Will is always, and in every individual act, neceſſarily determined by the ſtrongeſt motive; and ſo is always unable to go againſt the motive, which, all things conſidered, has now the greateſt ſtrength and advantage to move the Will.—But not further to inſiſt on theſe things, the truth of the poſition now laid down, *viz.* that when the Will is oppoſite *to*, or failing of a compliance with a thing *in its original determining inclination or act*, it is not able to comply, appears by the conſideration of theſe two things.

1. The Will in the time of that diverſe or oppoſite leading act or inclination, and when actually under the influence of it, is not able to exert itſelf to the contrary, to make an alteration, in order to a compliance. The inclination is unable to change itſelf; and that for this plain reaſon, that it is unable to incline to change itſelf. Preſent choice cannot at preſent chooſe to be otherwiſe: for that would be *at preſent* to chooſe ſomething diverſe from what is *at preſent* choſen. If the Will, all things now conſidered, inclines or chooſes to go that way, then it cannot chooſe, all things now conſidered, to go the other way, and ſo cannot chooſe to be made to go the other way. To ſuppoſe that the mind is now

ſincerely inclined to change itſelf to a different inclination, is to ſuppoſe the mind is now truly inclined otherwiſe than it is now inclined. The Will may oppoſe ſome future remote act that it is expoſed to, but not its own preſent act.

2. As it is impoſſible that the Will ſhould comply with the thing commanded, with reſpect to its *leading act*, by any act of its own, in the time of that diverſe or oppoſite *leading and original act*, or after it has actually come under the influence of that *determining choice or inclination;* ſo it is impoſſible it ſhould be determined to a compliance by any foregoing act; for, by the very ſuppoſition, there is no foregoing act; the oppoſite or non-complying act being that act which is *original* and *determining* in the caſe. Therefore it muſt be ſo, that if this *firſt determining act* be found non-complying, on the propoſal of the Command, the mind is morally unable to obey. For to ſuppoſe it to be able to obey, is to ſuppoſe it to be able to determine and cauſe its *firſt determining act* to be otherwiſe, and that it has power better to govern and regulate its *firſt governing and regulating act*, which is abſurd; for it is to ſuppoſe a prior act of the Will, determining its firſt determining act; that is, an act prior to the firſt, and leading and governing the original and governing act of all; which is a contradiction.

Here if it ſhould be ſaid, that although the mind has not any ability to Will contrary to what it does Will, in the original and leading act of the Will, becauſe there is ſuppoſed to be no prior act to determine and order it otherwiſe, and the Will cannot immediately change itſelf, becauſe it cannot at preſent incline to a change; yet the mind has an ability for the preſent to *forbear* to proceed to action, and taking time for deliberation; which may be an occaſion of the change of the inclination,

I anſwer, (1.) In this objection that ſeems to be forgotten which was obſerved before, *viz.* that the determining to take the matter into conſideration, is itſelf an act of the Will: and if this be all the act wherein the mind exerciſes ability and freedom, then this, by the ſuppoſition, muſt be all that can be commanded or required by precept. And if this act be the commanding act, then all that has been obſerved concerning the commanding act of the Will remains true, that the very want of it is a moral Inability to exert it, *&c.* (2.) We are ſpeaking concerning the firſt and leading act of the Will in the caſe, or about the affair; and if a determining to deliberate, or on the contrary, to proceed immediately without deliberating, be the firſt and leading act; or whether it be or no, if there be another act before it, which determines that; or whatever be the original and leading act; ſtill the foregoing proof ſtands good, that the non-compliance of the leading act implies moral Inability to comply.

If it ſhould be objected, that theſe things make all moral Inability equal, and ſuppoſe men morally unable to Will otherwiſe than they actually do Will, in all caſes, and equally ſo in every inſtance.

In anſwer to this objection, I deſire two things may be obſerved. *Firſt*, That if by being *equally* unable, be meant as *really* unable; then, ſo far as the Inability is merely moral, it is true, the Will, in every inſtance, acts by moral neceſſity and is morally unable to act otherwiſe, as truly and properly in one caſe as another; as I humbly conceive has been perfectly and abundantly demonſtrated by what has been ſaid in the preceding part of this Eſſay. But yet, in ſome reſpect, the Inability may be ſaid to be greater in ſome inſtances than others: though the man may be truly unable, (if moral Inability can truly be called Inability,) yet he may be further from

* Vide page 35

being able to do ſome things than others. As it is in things, which men are naturally unable to do.— A perſon, whoſe ſtrength is no more than ſufficient to lift the weight of one hundred pounds, is as truly and really unable to lift one hundred and one pounds, as ten thouſand pounds; but yet he is further from being able to lift the latter weight than the former; and ſo, according to common uſe of ſpeech, has a greater Inability for it. So it is in moral Inability. A man is truly morally unable to chooſe contrary to a preſent inclination, which in the leaſt degree prevails; or, contrary to that motive, which, all things conſidered, has ſtrength and advantage now to move the Will, in the leaſt degree, ſuperior to all other motives in view: but yet he is further from ability to reſiſt a very ſtrong habit, and a violent and deeply rooted inclination, or a motive vaſtly exceeding all others in ſtrength. And again, the Inability may, in ſome reſpects, be called greater in ſome inſtances than others, as it may be *more general* and *extenſive to all acts of that kind.* So men may be ſaid to be unable in a different ſenſe, and to be further from moral ability, who have that moral Inability which is *general* and *habitual*, than they who have only that Inability which is *occaſional* and *particular*.* Thus in caſes of natural Inability; he that is born blind may be ſaid to be unable to ſee, in a different manner, and is, in ſome reſpects, further from being able to ſee, than he whoſe ſight is hindered by a tranſient cloud or miſt.

And beſides, that which was obſerved in the firſt part of this diſcourſe, concerning the Inability which attends a *ſtrong and ſettled habit*, ſhould be here remembered, *viz.* that fixed habit is attended with this peculiar moral Inability, by which it is diſtin-

* See this diſtinction of moral Inability explained in PART I. *Sect.* IV.

guiſhed from *occaſional volition*, namely, that endeavours to avoid future volitions of that kind, which are agreeable to ſuch a habit, much more frequently and commonly prove vain and inſufficient. For though it is impoſſible there ſhould be any true ſincere deſires and endeavours againſt a preſent volition or choice, yet there may be againſt volitions of that kind, when viewed at a diſtance. A perſon may deſire and uſe means to prevent future exerciſes of a certain inclination; and, in order to it, may wiſh the habit might be removed; but his deſires and endeavours may be ineffectual. The man may be ſaid in ſome ſenſe to be unable; yea, even as the word *unable* is a *relative term*, and has relation to ineffectual endeavours; yet not with regard to preſent, but remote endeavours.

Secondly, It muſt be borne in mind, according to what was obſerved before, that indeed no Inability whatſoever, which is merely moral, is properly called by the name of *Inability*; and that in the ſtricteſt propriety of ſpeech, a man may be ſaid to have a thing in his power, if he has it at his election; and he cannot be ſaid to be unable to do a thing, when he can, if he now pleaſes, or whenever he has a proper, direct and immediate deſire for it. As to thoſe deſires and endeavours, that may be againſt the exerciſes of a ſtrong habit, with regard to which men may be ſaid to be unable to avoid thoſe exerciſes, they are remote deſires and endeavours in two reſpects. *Firſt*, as to *time;* they are never againſt preſent volitions, but only againſt volitions of ſuch a kind, when viewed at a diſtance. *Secondly*, as to their *nature;* theſe oppoſite deſires are not directly and properly againſt the habit and inclination itſelf, or the volitions in which it is exerciſed; for theſe, in themſelves conſidered, are agreeable; but againſt ſomething elſe, that attends them, or is their conſe-

quence; the oppoſition of the mind is levelled entirely againſt this; the inclination or volitions themſelves are not at all oppoſed directly, and for their own ſake; but only indirectly and remotely on the account of ſomething alien and foreign.

III. Though the oppoſition of the Will itſelf, or the very want of Will to a thing commanded, implies a moral Inability to that thing; yet, if it be, as has been already ſhewn, that the being of a good ſtate or act of Will, is a thing moſt properly required by Command; then, in ſome caſes, ſuch a ſtate or act of Will may properly be required, which at preſent is not, and which may alſo be wanting after it is commanded. And therefore thoſe things may properly be commanded, which men have a moral Inability for.

Such a ſtate, or act of the Will, may be required by Command, as does not already exiſt. For if that volition only may be commanded to be which already is, there could be no uſe of precept; Commands in all caſes would be perfectly vain and impertinent. And not only may ſuch a Will be required, as is wanting before the Command is given, but alſo ſuch as may poſſibly be wanting afterwards; ſuch as the exhibition of the Command may not be effectual to produce or excite. Otherwiſe, no ſuch things as Diſobedience to a proper and rightful Command is poſſible in any caſe; and there is no caſe ſuppoſable or poſſible, wherein there can be an inexcuſable or faulty Diſobedience; which *Arminians* cannot affirm conſiſtently with their principles: for this makes Obedience to juſt and proper Commands always *neceſſary*, and Diſobedience impoſſible. And ſo the *Arminian* would overthrow himſelf, yielding the very point we are upon, which he ſo ſtrenuouſly denies, *viz.* that law and Command are conſiſtent with neceſſity.

If merely that Inability will excuſe diſobedience, which is implied in the oppoſition or defect of inclination, remaining after the Command is exhibited, then wickedneſs always carries that in it which excuſes it. It is evermore ſo, that by how much the more wickedneſs there is in a man's heart, by ſo much is his inclination to evil the ſtronger, and by ſo much the more, therefore, has he of moral Inability to the good required. His moral Inability, conſiſting in the ſtrength of his evil inclination, is the very thing wherein his wickedneſs conſiſts; and yet, according to *Arminian* principles, it muſt be a thing inconſiſtent with wickedneſs; and by how much the more he has of it, by ſo much is he the further from wickedneſs.

Therefore, on the whole, it is manifeſt, that moral Inability alone (which conſiſts in diſinclination) never renders any thing improperly the ſubject matter of precept or Command, and never can excuſe any perſon in diſobedience, or want of conformity to a Command.

Natural Inability, ariſing from the want of natural capacity, or external hindrance, (which alone is properly called Inability) without doubt wholly excuſes, or makes a thing improperly the matter of Command. If men are excuſed from doing or acting any good thing, ſuppoſed to be commanded, it muſt be through ſome defect or obſtacle that is not in the Will itſelf, but extrinſic to it; either in the capacity of underſtanding, or body, or outward circumſtances.

Here two or three things may be obſerved,

1. As to ſpiritual duties or acts, or any good thing in the ſtate or imminent acts of the Will itſelf, or of the affections, (which are only certain modes of the exerciſe of the Will) if perſons are juſtly excuſed, it muſt be through want of capacity in the natural faculty of underſtanding. Thus the ſame ſpiritual

duties, or holy affections and exercises of heart, cannot be required of men, as may be of angels; the capacity of understanding being so much inferior. So men cannot be required to love those amiable persons, whom they have had no opportunity to see, or hear of, or come to the knowledge of, in any way agreeable to the natural state and capacity of the human understanding. But the insufficiency of motives will not excuse; unless their being insufficient arises not from the moral state of the Will or inclination itself, but from the state of the natural understanding. The great kindness and generosity of another may be a motive insufficient to excite gratitude in the person, that receives the kindness, thro' his vile and ungrateful temper: in this case, the insufficiency of the motive arises from the state of the Will or inclination of heart, and does not at all excuse. But if this generosity is not sufficient to excite gratitude, being unknown, there being no means of information adequate to the state and measure of the person's faculties, this insufficiency is attended with a natural Inability which entirely excuses.

2. As to such motions of body, or exercises and alterations of mind, which does not consist in the imminent acts or state of the Will itself, but are supposed to be required as effects of the Will; I say, in such supposed effects of the Will, in cases wherein there is no want of a capacity of understanding; that Inability, and that only excuses, which consists in want of connexion between them and the Will. If the Will fully complies, and the proposed effect does not prove, according to the laws of nature, to be connected with his volition, the man is perfectly excused; he has a natural Inability to the thing required. For the Will itself, as has been observed, is all that can be directly and immediately required by Command; and other things only indirectly, as con-

nected with the Will. If, therefore, there be a full compliance of Will, the perſon has done his duty; and if other things do not prove to be connected with his volition, that is not owing to him.

3. Both theſe kinds of natural Inability that have been mentioned, and ſo all Inability that excuſes, may be reſolved into one thing; namely, want of natural capacity or ſtrength; either capacity of underſtanding, or external ſtrength. For when there are external defects and obſtacles, they would be no obſtacles, were it not for the imperfection and limitations of underſtanding and ſtrength.

Corol. If things for which men have a moral Inability, may properly be the matter of precept or Command, then they may alſo of Invitation and counſel. Commands and Invitations come very much to the ſame thing; the difference is only circumſtantial: Commands are as much a manifeſtation of the Will of him that ſpeaks, as Invitations, and as much teſtimonies of expectation of compliance. The difference between them lies in nothing that touches the affair in hand. The main difference between Command and Invitation conſiſts in the enforcement of the Will of him who commands or invites. In the latter it is his *kindneſs*, the goodneſs which his Will ariſes from: in the former it is his *authority*.—But whatever be the ground of the Will of him that ſpeaks, or the enforcement of what he ſays, yet ſeeing neither his Will nor expectation is any more teſtified in the one caſe than the other; therefore a perſon's being directed *by Invitation*, is no more an evidence of inſincerity in him that directs in manifeſting either a Will, or expectation which he has not, than his being known to be morally unable to do what he is directed to *by command*. So that all this grand objection of *Arminians* againſt the Inability of fallen men to exert faith in Chriſt, or to

perform other ſpiritual goſpel duties, from the ſincerity of God's counſels and Invitations, muſt be without force.

Section V.

That Sincerity of deſires and Endeavours, *which is ſuppoſed to* excuſe *in the Non-performance of Things in themſelves good, particularly conſidered.*

It is what is much inſiſted on by many, that ſome men, though they are not able to perform ſpiritual duties, ſuch as repentance of ſin, love of God, a cordial acceptance of Chriſt as exhibited and offered in the goſpel, &c. yet they may ſincerely deſire and endeavour theſe things; and therefore muſt be excuſed; it being unreaſonable to blame them for the omiſſion of thoſe things, which they ſincerely deſire and endeavour to do, but cannot do.

Concerning this matter, the following things may be obſerved.

1. What is here ſuppoſed, is a great miſtake, and groſs abſurdity; even that men may ſincerely chooſe and deſire thoſe ſpiritual duties of love, acceptance, choice, rejection, &c. conſiſting in the exerciſe of the Will itſelf, or in the diſpoſition and inclination of the heart; and yet not be able to perform or exert them. This is abſurd, becauſe it is abſurd to ſuppoſe that a man ſhould directly, properly and ſincerely incline to have an inclination, which at the ſame time is contrary to his inclination: for that is to ſuppoſe him not to be inclined to that, which he is inclined to. If a man, in the ſtate and acts of his Will and inclination, does properly and directly fall in with thoſe duties, he therein performs them: for

the duties themſelves conſiſt in that very thing; they conſiſt in the ſtate and acts of the Will being ſo formed and directed. If the ſoul properly and ſincerely falls in with a certain propoſed act of Will or choice, the ſoul therein makes that choice its own. Even as when a moving body falls in with a propoſed direction of its motion, that is the ſame things as to move in that direction.

2. That which is called a *deſire* and *willingneſs* for thoſe inward duties, in ſuch as do not perform, has reſpect to theſe duties only indirectly and remotely, and is improperly repreſented as a willingneſs for them; not only becauſe (as was obſerved before) it reſpects thoſe good volitions only in a diſtant view, and with reſpect to future time; but alſo becauſe evermore, not theſe things themſelves, but ſomething elſe, that is alien and foreign, is the object that terminates theſe volitions and deſires.

A drunkard, who continues in his drunkenneſs, being under the power of a love, and violent appetite to ſtrong drink, and without any love to virtue; but being alſo extremely covetous and cloſe, and very much exerciſed and grieved at the diminution of his eſtate, and proſpect of poverty, may in a ſort *deſire* the virtue of temperance; and though his preſent Will is to gratify his extravagant appetite, yet he may wiſh he had a heart to forbear future acts of intemperance, and forſake his exceſſes, through an unwillingneſs to part with his money: but ſtill he goes on with his drunkenneſs; his wiſhes and endeavours are inſufficient and ineffectual: ſuch a man has no proper, direct, ſincere willingneſs to forſake this vice, and the vicious deeds which belong to it: for he acts voluntarily in continuing to drink to exceſs: his deſire is very improperly called a willingneſs to be temperate; it is no true deſire of that virtue; for it is not that virtue, that terminates his wiſhes; nor

have they any direct reſpect at all to it. It is only *the ſaving his money*, and avoiding poverty, that terminates and exhauſts the whole ſtrength of his deſire. The virtue of temperance is regarded only very indirectly and improperly, even as a neceſſary means of gratifying the vice of covetouſneſs.

So, a man of an exceeding corrupt and wicked heart, who has no love to God and Jeſus Chriſt, but, on the contrary, being very profanely and carnally inclined, has the greateſt diſtaſte of the things of religion, and enmity againſt them; yet being of a family, that from one generation to another, have moſt of them died, in youth, of an hereditary conſumption; and ſo having little hope of living long; and having been inſtructed in the neceſſity of a ſupreme love to Chriſt, and gratitude for his death and ſufferings, in order to his ſalvation from eternal miſery; if under theſe circumſtances he ſhould, through fear of eternal torments, wiſh he had ſuch a diſpoſition: but his profane and carnal heart remaining, he continues ſtill in his habitual diſtaſte *of*, and enmity *to* God and religion, and wholly without any exerciſe of that love and gratitude, (as doubtleſs the very devils themſelves, notwithſtanding all the deviliſhneſs of their temper, would wiſh for a holy heart, if by that means they could get out of hell:) in this caſe, there is no ſincere Willingneſs to love Chriſt and chooſe him as his chief good: theſe holy diſpoſitions and exerciſes are not at all the direct object of the Will: they truly ſhare no part of the inclination or deſire of the ſoul; but all is terminated on deliverance from torment: and theſe graces and pious volitions, notwithſtanding this forced conſent, are looked upon undeſirable; as when a ſick man deſires a doſe he greatly abhors, to ſave his life.—From theſe things it appears,

3. That this indirect Willingneſs which has been

ſpoken of, is not that exerciſe of the Will which the command requires; but is entirely a different one; being a volition of a different nature, and terminated altogether on different objects; wholly falling ſhort of that virtue of Will, which the command has reſpect to.

4. This other volition, which has only ſome indirect concern with the duty required, cannot excuſe for the want of that good will itſelf, which is commanded; being not the thing which anſwers and fulfils the command, and being wholly deſtitute of the virtue which the command ſeeks.

Further to illuſtrate this matter.—If a child has a moſt excellent father, that has ever treated him with fatherly kindneſs and tenderneſs, and has every way, in the higheſt degree, merited his love and dutiful regard, being with all very wealthy; but the ſon is of ſo vile a diſpoſition, that he inveterately hates his father; and yet, apprehending that his hatred of him is like to prove his ruin, by bringing him finally to poverty and abject circumſtances, through his father's diſinheriting him, or otherwiſe; which is exceeding croſs to his avarice and ambition; he, therefore, wiſhes it were otherwiſe: but yet remaining under the invincible power of his vile and malignant diſpoſition, he continues ſtill in his ſettled hatred of his father. Now, if ſuch a ſon's indirect willingneſs to have love and honor towards his father, at all acquits or excuſes before God, for his failing of actually exerciſing theſe diſpoſitions towards him, which God requires, it muſt be on one of theſe accounts. (1.) Either that it anſwers and fulfils the command. But this it does not by the ſuppoſition; becauſe the thing commanded is love and honor to his worthy parent. If the command be proper and juſt, as is ſuppoſed, then it obliges to the thing commanded; and ſo nothing elſe but that

can anſwer the obligation. Or, (2.) It muſt be at leaſt, becauſe there is that virtue or goodneſs in his indirect willingneſs, that is equivalent to the virtue required; and ſo balances or countervails it, and makes up for the want of it. But that alſo is contrary to the ſuppoſition. The willingneſs the ſon has merely from a regard to money and honor, has no goodneſs in it, to countervail the want of the pious filial reſpect required.

Sincerity and reality, in that indirect willingneſs, which has been ſpoken of, does not make it the better. That which is real and hearty is often called ſincere; whether it be in virtue or vice. Some perſons are ſincerely *bad;* others are ſincerely *good;* and others may be ſincere and hearty in things, which are in their own nature *indifferent;* as a man may be ſincerely deſirous of eating when he is hungry. But a being ſincere, hearty and in good earneſt, is no virtue, unleſs it be in a thing that is virtuous. A man may be ſincere and hearty in joining a crew of pirates, or a gang of robbers. When the devils cried out, and beſought Chriſt not to torment them, it was no mere pretence; they were very hearty in their deſires not to be tormented: but this did not make their Will or deſires virtuous.— And if men have ſincere deſires, which are in their kind and nature no better, it can be no excuſe for the want of any required virtue.

And as a man's being ſincere in ſuch an indirect deſire or *willingneſs* to do his duty, as has been mentioned, cannot excuſe for the want of performance; ſo it is with *Endeavours* ariſing from ſuch a willingneſs. The Endeavours can have no more goodneſs in them, than the Will which they are the effect and expreſſion of. And, therefore, however ſincere and real, and however great a perſon's Endeavours are; yea, though they ſhould be to the utmoſt of his abil-

ity; unleſs the Will which they proceed from be truly good and virtuous, they can be of no avail, influence or weight to any purpoſe whatſoever, in a moral ſenſe or reſpect. That which is not truly virtuous, in God's ſight, is looked upon, by Him, as good for nothing: and ſo can be of no value, weight or influence in his account, to recommend, ſatisfy, excuſe or make up for any moral defect. For nothing can counter-balance evil, but good. If evil be in one ſcale, and we put a great deal into the other, ſincere and earneſt deſires, and many and great Endeavours; yet, if there be no real goodneſs in all, there is no weight in it; and ſo it does nothing towards balancing the real weight, which is in the oppoſite ſcale. It is only like the ſubtracting a thouſand naughts from before a real number, which leaves the ſum juſt as it was.

Indeed ſuch Endeavours may have a *negatively* good influence. Thoſe things, which have no poſitive virtue have no poſitive moral influence; yet they may be an occaſion of perſons avoiding ſome poſitive evils. As if a man were in the water with a neighbour, that he had ill-will to, who could not ſwim, holding him by his hand; which neighbour was much in debt to him; and ſhould be tempted to let him ſink and drown; but ſhould refuſe to comply with the temptation; not from love to his neighbour, but from the love of money, and becauſe by his drowning he ſhould loſe his debt; that which he does in preſerving his neighbour from drowning, is nothing good in the ſight of God: yet hereby he avoids the greater guilt that would have been contracted, if he had deſignedly let his neighbour ſink and periſh. But when *Arminians*, in their diſputes with *Calviniſts*, inſiſt ſo much on ſincere deſires and Endeavours, as what muſt excuſe men, muſt be accepted of God, &c, it is

manifeſt they have reſpect to ſome poſitive moral weight or influence of thoſe deſires and Endeavours. Accepting, juſtifying or excuſing on the account of ſincere honeſt Endeavours (as they are called) and men's doing what they can, &c. has relation to ſome moral value, ſomething that is accepted as good, and as ſuch, countervailing ſome defect.

But there is a great and unknown deceit ariſing from the ambiguity of the phraſe, *ſincere Endeavours*. Indeed there is a vaſt indiſtinctneſs and unfixedneſs in moſt, or at leaſt very many of the terms uſed to expreſs things pertaining to moral and ſpiritual matters. Whence ariſe innumerable miſtakes, ſtrong prejudices, inextricable confuſion, and endleſs controverſy.

The word *ſincere*, is moſt commonly uſed to ſignify ſomething that is good: men are habituated to underſtand by it the ſame as *honeſt* and *upright;* which terms excite an idea of ſomething good in the ſtricteſt and higheſt ſenſe; good in the ſight of Him, who ſees not only the outward appearance, but the heart. And, therefore, men think that if a perſon be *ſincere*, he will certainly be accepted. If it be ſaid that any one is ſincere in his Endeavours, this ſuggeſts to men's minds as much, as that his heart and Will is good, that there is no defect of duty, as to virtuous inclination; he *honeſtly* and *uprightly* deſires and Endeavours to do as he is required; and this leads them to ſuppoſe, that it would be very hard and unreaſonable to puniſh him, only becauſe he is unſucceſsful in his Endeavours, the thing endeavoured being beyond his power.—Whereas it ought to be obſerved, that the word *ſincere* has theſe different ſignifications:

1. *Sincerity*, as the word is ſometimes uſed, ſignifies no more than *reality of Will and Endeavour*, with reſpect to any thing that is profeſſed or pretended; without any conſideration of the nature of the prin-

ciple or aim, whence this real Will and true Endeavour ariſes. If a man has ſome real deſire to obtain a thing, either direct or indirect, or does really Endeavour after a thing, he is ſaid ſincerely to deſire or Endeavour it; without any conſideration of the goodneſs or virtuouſneſs of the principle he acts from, or any excellency or worthineſs of the end he acts for. Thus a man who is kind to his neighbour's wife, who is ſick and languiſhing, and very helpful in her caſe, makes a ſhew of deſiring and endeavouring her reſtoration to health and vigour; and not only makes ſuch a ſhew, but there is a reality in his pretence, he does heartily and earneſtly deſire to have her health reſtored, and uſes his true and utmoſt Endeavours for it; he is ſaid ſincerely to deſire and Endeavour it; becauſe he does ſo truly or really; though perhaps the principle he acts from, is no other than a vile and ſcandalous paſſion; having lived in adultery with her, he earneſtly deſires to have her health and vigour reſtored, that he may return to his criminal pleaſures with her. Or,

2. By *ſincerity* is meant, not merely a *reality* of Will and Endeavour of ſome ſort or other, and from ſome conſideration or other, but a *virtuous ſincerity*. That is, that in the performance of thoſe particular acts, that are the matter of virtue or duty, there be not only the matter, but the form and eſſence of virtue, conſiſting in the aim that governs the act, and the principle exerciſed in it. There is not only the reality of the act, that is as it were the *body* of the duty; but alſo the *ſoul*, which ſhould properly belong to ſuch a body. In this ſenſe, a man is ſaid to be ſincere, when he acts with a *pure intention;* not from ſiniſter views, or bye-ends: he not only in reality deſires and ſeeks the thing to be done, or qualification to be obtained, for ſome end or other; but he Wills the thing directly and properly, as neither

forced nor bribed; the virtue of the thing is properly the object of the Will.

In the former ſenſe, a man is ſaid to be ſincere, in oppoſition to a mere pretence, and *ſhew of the particular thing to be done or exhibited*, without any real deſire or Endeavour at all. In the latter ſenſe, a man is ſaid to be ſincere, in oppoſition to that *ſhew of virtue there is in merely doing the matter of duty*, without the reality of the virtue itſelf in the ſoul, and the eſſence of it, which there is a ſhew of. A man may be ſincere in the former ſenſe, and yet in the latter be in the ſight of God, who ſearches the heart, a vile hypocrite.

In the latter kind of ſincerity, only, is there any thing truly valuable or acceptable in the ſight of God. And this is the thing, which in Scripture is called *ſincerity, uprightneſs, integrity, truth in the inward parts*, and a *being of a perfect heart*. And if there be ſuch a ſincerity, and ſuch a degree of it as there ought to be, and there be any thing further that the man is not able to perform, or which does not prove to be connected with his ſincere deſires and Endeavours, the man is wholly excuſed and acquitted in the ſight of God; his Will ſhall ſurely be accepted for his deed: and ſuch a ſincere Will and Endeavour is all that in ſtrictneſs is required of him, by any command of God. But as to the other kind of ſincerity of deſires and Endeavours, it having no virtue in it, (as was obſerved before) can be of no avail before God, in any caſe, to recommend, ſatisfy, or excuſe, and has no poſitive moral weight or influence whatſoever.

Corol. 1. Hence it may be inferred, that nothing in the reaſon and nature of things appears, from the conſideration of any moral weight of that former kind of ſincerity, which has been ſpoken of, at all obliging us to believe, or leading us to ſuppoſe, that

God has made any poſitive Promiſes of ſalvation, or grace, or any ſaving aſſiſtance, or any ſpiritual benefit whatſoever, to any Deſires, Prayers, Endeavours, Striving, or Obedience of thoſe, who hitherto have no true virtue or holineſs in their hearts; tho' we ſhould ſuppoſe all the Sincerity, and the utmoſt degree of Endeavour, that is poſſible to be in a perſon without holineſs.

Some object againſt God's requiring, as the condition of ſalvation, thoſe holy exerciſes, which are the reſult of a ſupernatural renovation: ſuch as a ſupreme reſpect to Chriſt, love to God, loving holineſs for its own ſake, &c. that theſe inward diſpoſitions and exerciſes are above men's power, as they are by nature; and therefore that we may conclude, that when men are brought to be ſincere in their Endeavours, and do as well as they can, they are accepted; and that this muſt be all that God requires, in order to men's being received as the objects of his favour, and muſt be what God has appointed as the condition of ſalvation. Concerning which, I would obſerve, that in ſuch a manner of ſpeaking of *men's being accepted, becauſe they are ſincere, and do as well as they can,* there is evidently a ſuppoſition of ſome virtue, ſome degree of that which is truly good; though it does not go ſo far as were to be wiſhed. For if men *do what they can,* unleſs their ſo doing be from ſome good principle, diſpoſition, or exerciſe of heart, ſome virtuous inclination or act of the Will; their ſo doing what they can, is in ſome reſpects not a whit better than if they did nothing at all. In ſuch a caſe, there is no more poſitive moral goodneſs in a man's doing what he can, than in a wind-mill's doing what it can; becauſe the action does no more proceed from virtue; and there is nothing in ſuch ſincerity of Endeavour, or doing what we can, that ſhould render it any more a prop-

er or fit recommendation to poſitive favour and acceptance, or the condition of any reward or actual benefit, than doing nothing: for both the one and the other are alike nothing, as to any true moral weight or value.

Corol. 2. Hence alſo it follows, there is nothing that appears in the reaſon and nature of things, which can juſtly lead us to determine, that God will certainly give the neceſſary means of ſalvation, or ſome way or other beſtow true holineſs and eternal life on thoſe *Heathen*, who are ſincere (in the ſenſe above explained) in their Endeavours to find out the Will of the Deity, and to pleaſe him, according to their light, that they may eſcape his future diſpleaſure and wrath, and obtain happineſs in the future ſtate, through his favour.

Section VI.

Liberty of Indifference, *not only not neceſſary to* Virtue, *but utterly inconſiſtent with it; and all, either virtuous or vicious* Habits or Inclinations, *inconſiſtent with* Arminian *Notions of Liberty and moral Agency.*

To ſuppoſe ſuch a freedom of Will, as *Arminians* talk of, to be requiſite to Virtue and vice, is many ways contrary to common ſenſe.

If Indifference belongs to Liberty of Will, as *Arminians* ſuppoſe, and it be eſſential to a virtuous action, that it be performed in a ſtate of Liberty, as they alſo ſuppoſe; it will follow, that it is eſſential to a virtuous action, that it be performed in a ſtate of Indifference: and if it be performed in a *ſtate* of Indifference, then doubtleſs it muſt be performed in the *time* of Indifference. And ſo it will follow, that

in order to the virtuouſneſs of an act, the heart muſt be indifferent in the time of the performance of that act, and the more indifferent and cold the heart is with relation to the act, which is performed, ſo much the better; becauſe the act is performed with ſo much the greater Liberty. But is this agreeable to the light of nature? Is it agreeable to the notions, which mankind, in all ages, have of Virtue, that it lies in that, which is contrary to Indifference, even in the *tendency* and *inclination* of the heart to virtuous action; and that the ſtronger the inclination, and ſo the further from Indifference, the more virtuous the *heart*, and ſo much more praiſe-worthy the *act* which proceeds from it?

If we ſhould ſuppoſe (contrary to what has been before demonſtrated) that there may be an act of Will in a ſtate of Indifference; for inſtance, this act, *viz.* The Will's determining to put itſelf out of a ſtate of Indifference, and give itſelf a preponderation one way, then it would follow, on *Arminian* principles, that this act or determination of the Will is that alone wherein Virtue conſiſts, becauſe this only is performed, while the mind remains in a ſtate of Indifference, and ſo in a ſtate of Liberty: for when once the mind is put out of its equilibrium, it is no longer in ſuch a ſtate; and therefore all the acts, which follow afterwards, proceeding from bias, can have the nature neither of Virtue nor Vice. Or if the thing, which the Will can do, while yet in a ſtate of Indifference, and ſo of Liberty, be only to ſuſpend acting, and determine to take the matter into conſideration, then this determination is that alone wherein Virtue conſiſts, and not proceeding to action after the ſcale is turned by conſideration. So that it will follow, from theſe principles, all that is done after the mind, by any means, is once out of its equilibrium and already poſſeſſed by an inclination, and ariſing from that

inclination, has nothing of the nature of Virtue or Vice, and is worthy of neither blame or praiſe. But how plainly contrary is this to the univerſal ſenſe of mankind, and to the notion they have of ſincerely virtuous actions? Which is, that they are actions, which proceed from a heart *well diſpoſed* and *inclined*; and the *ſtronger*, and the more *fixed* and *determined* the good diſpoſition of the heart, the greater the ſincerity of Virtue, and ſo the more of the truth and reality of it. But if there be any acts, which are done in a ſtate of equilibrium, or ſpring immediately from perfect Indifference and coldneſs of heart, they cannot ariſe from any good principle or diſpoſition in the heart; and, conſequently, according to common ſenſe, have no ſincere goodneſs in them, having no virtue of heart in them. To have a virtuous heart, is to have a heart that favours Virtue, and is friendly to it, and not one perfectly cold and indifferent about it.

And beſides, the actions that are done in a ſtate of Indifference, or that ariſe immediately out of ſuch a ſtate, cannot be virtuous, becauſe, by the ſuppoſition, they are not determined by any preceding choice. For if there be preceding choice, then choice intervenes between the act and the ſtate of Indifference; which is contrary to the ſuppoſition of the act's ariſing immediately out of Indifference. But thoſe acts, which are not determined by preceding choice, cannot be virtuous or vicious by *Arminian* principles, becauſe they are not determined by the Will. So that neither one way, nor the other, can any actions be virtuous or vicious, according to *Arminian* principles. If the action *be determined* by a preceding act of choice, it cannot be virtuous; becauſe the action is not done in a ſtate of Indifference, nor does immediately ariſe from ſuch a ſtate; and ſo is not done in a ſtate of Liberty. If the action be *not de-*

termined by a preceding act of choice, then it cannot be virtuous; becauſe then the Will is not ſelf-determined in it. So that it is made certain, that neither Virtue nor Vice can ever find any place in the univerſe.

Moreover, that it is neceſſary to a virtuous action that it be performed in a ſtate of Indifference, under a notion of that being a ſtate of Liberty, is contrary to common ſenſe; as it is a dictate of common ſenſe, that Indifference itſelf, in many caſes, is vicious, and ſo to a high degree. As if when I ſee my neighbour or near friend, and one who has in the higheſt degree merited of me, in extreme diſtreſs, and ready to periſh, I find an Indifference in my heart with reſpect to any thing propoſed to be done, which I can eaſily do, for his relief. So if it ſhould be propoſed to me to blaſpheme God, or kill my father, or do numberleſs other things, which might be mentioned: the being indifferent, for a moment, would be highly vicious and vile.

And it may be further obſerved, that to ſuppoſe this Liberty of Indifference is eſſential to Virtue and Vice, deſtroys the great difference of degrees of the guilt of different crimes, and takes away the heinouſneſs of the moſt flagitious horrid iniquities; ſuch as adultery, beſtiality, murder, perjury, blaſphemy, &c. For, according to theſe principles, there is no harm at all in having the mind in a ſtate of perfect Indifference with reſpect to theſe crimes: nay, it is abſolutely neceſſary in order to any Virtue in avoiding them, or Vice in doing them. But for the mind to be in a ſtate of Indifference with reſpect to them, is to be next door to doing them: it is then infinitely near to chooſing, and ſo committing the fact: for equilibrium is the next ſtep to a degree of preponderation; and one, even the leaſt degree of preponderation, (all things conſidered) is choice. And not

only ſo, but for the Will to be in a ſtate of perfect equilibrium with reſpect to ſuch crimes, is for the mind to be in ſuch a ſtate, as to be full as likely to chooſe them as to refuſe them, to do them as to omit them. And if our minds muſt be in ſuch a ſtate, wherein it is as near to chooſing as refuſing, and wherein it muſt of neceſſity, according to the nature of things, be as likely to commit them, as to refrain from them; where is the exceeding heinouſneſs of chooſing and committing them? If there be no harm in often being in ſuch a ſtate, wherein the probability of doing and forbearing are exactly equal, there being an equilibrium, and no more tendency to one than the other; then, according to the nature and laws of ſuch a contingence, it may be expected, as an *inevitable* conſequence of ſuch a diſpoſition of things, that we ſhould chooſe them as often as reject them: that it ſhould generally ſo fall out is neceſſary, as equality in the effect is the natural conſequence of the equal tendency of the cauſe, or of the antecedent ſtate of things from which the effect ariſes. Why then ſhould we be ſo exceedingly to blame, if it does ſo fall out?

It is many ways apparent, that the *Arminian* ſcheme of Liberty is utterly inconſiſtent with the being of any ſuch things as either virtuous or vicious habits or diſpoſitions. If Liberty of *Indifference* be eſſential to moral agency, then there can be no Virtue in any habitual inclinations of the heart; which are contrary to Indifference, and imply in their nature the very deſtruction and excluſion of it. They ſuppoſe nothing can be virtuous, in which no Liberty is exerciſed; but how abſurd is it to talk of exerciſing Indifference under bias and preponderation!

And if *ſelf-determining power* in the Will be neceſſary to moral agency, praiſe, blame, &c. then nothing done by the Will can be any further praiſe or

blame-worthy, than so far as the Will is moved, swayed and determined by itself, and the scales turned by the sovereign power the Will has over itself. And therefore the Will must not be put out of its balance already, the preponderation must not be determined and effected before-hand; and so the self-determining act anticipated. Thus it appears another way, that habitual bias is inconsistent with that Liberty, which *Arminians* suppose to be necessary to Virtue or Vice; and so it follows, that habitual bias itself cannot be either virtuous or vicious.

The same thing follows from their doctrine concerning the Inconsistence of *Necessity* with Liberty, Praise, Dispraise, &c. None will deny, that bias and inclination may be so strong as to be invincible, and leave no possibility of the Will's determining contrary to it; and so be attended with Necessity. This Dr. Whitby allows concerning the Will of God, Angels, and glorious Saints, with respect to good; and the Will of Devils with respect to evil. Therefore, if Necessity be inconsistent with Liberty; then, when fixed inclination is to such a degree of strength, it utterly excludes all Virtue, vice, praise or blame. And, if so, then the nearer Habits are to this strength, the more do they impede Liberty, and so diminish praise and blame. If very strong Habits destroy Liberty, the lesser ones proportionably hinder it, according to their degree of strength. And therefore it will follow, that then is the act most virtuous or vicious, when performed without any inclination or habitual bias at all; because it is then performed with most Liberty.

Every prepossessing fixed bias on the mind brings a degree of moral inability for the contrary; because so far as themind is biased and prepossessed, so much *hinderance* is there of the contrary. And therefore if moral inability be inconsistent with moral agency,

or the nature of Virtue and Vice, then, ſo far as there is any ſuch thing as evil diſpoſition of heart, or habitual depravity of inclination; whether covetouſneſs, pride, malice, cruelty, or whatever elſe; ſo much the more excuſeable perſons are; ſo much the leſs have their evil acts of this kind the nature of Vice. And, on the contrary, whatever excellent diſpoſitions and inclinations they have, ſo much are they the leſs virtuous.

It is evident, that no habitual diſpoſition of heart, whether it be to a greater or leſs degree, can be in *any degree* virtuous or vicious; or the actions which proceed from them *at all* praiſe or blame-worthy.—Becauſe, though we ſhould ſuppoſe the Habit not to be of ſuch ſtrength, as wholly to take away all moral ability and ſelf-determining power; or hinder but that, although the act be partly from bias, yet it may be in part from ſelf-determination; yet in this caſe, all that is from antecedent bias muſt be ſet aſide, as of no conſideration; and in eſtimating the degree of Virtue or Vice, no more muſt be conſidered than what ariſes from ſelf-determining power, without any influence of that bias, becauſe Liberty is exerciſed in no more: ſo that all that is the exerciſe of habitual inclination, is thrown away, as not belonging to the morality of the action. By which it appears, that no exerciſe of theſe Habits, let them be ſtronger or weaker, can ever have any thing of the nature of either Virtue or Vice.

Here if any one ſhould ſay, that notwithſtanding all theſe things, there may be the nature of Virtue and Vice in the Habits of the mind; becauſe theſe Habits may be the effects of thoſe acts, wherein the mind exerciſed Liberty; that however the foremen-tioned reaſons will prove that no Habits, which are natural, or that are born or created with us, can be either virtuous or vicious; yet they will not prove

this of Habits, which have been acquired and eſtabliſhed by repeated free acts.

To ſuch an objector I would ſay, that this evaſion will not at all help the matter. For if freedom of Will be eſſential to the very *nature* of Virtue and Vice, then there is no Virtue or Vice but only in that very thing, wherein this Liberty is exerciſed. If a man in one or more things, that he does, exerciſes Liberty, and then by thoſe acts is brought into ſuch circumſtances, that his Liberty ceaſes, and there follows a long ſeries of acts or events that come to paſs neceſſarily; thoſe conſequent acts are not virtuous or vicious, rewardable or puniſhable; but only the free acts that eſtabliſhed this neceſſity; for in them alone was the man free. The following effects, that are neceſſary, have no more of the nature of Virtue or Vice, than health or ſickneſs of body have properly the nature of Virtue or Vice, being the effects of a courſe of free acts of temperance or intemperance; or than the good qualities of a clock are of the nature of Virtue, which are the effects of free acts of the artificer; or the goodneſs and ſweetneſs of the fruits of a garden are moral Virtues, being the effects of the free and faithful acts of the gardener. If Liberty be abſolutely requiſite to the morality of actions, and neceſſity wholly inconſiſtent with it, as *Arminians* greatly inſiſt; then no *neceſſary effects* whatſoever, let the cauſe be never ſo good or bad, can be virtuous or vicious; but the Virtue or vice muſt be only in the *free cauſe*. Agreeably to this, Dr. Whitby ſuppoſes, the neceſſity that attends the good and evil Habits of the ſaints in heaven, and damned in hell, which are the conſequence of their free acts in their ſtate of probation, are not rewardable or puniſhable.

On the whole, it appears, that if the notions of *Arminians* concerning liberty and moral agency be true, it will follow, that there is no Virtue in any

ſuch Habits or qualities as humility, meekneſs, patience, mercy, gratitude, generoſity, heavenly-mindedneſs; nothing at all praiſe-worthy in loving Chriſt above father and mother, wife and children, or our own lives; or in delight in holineſs, hungering and thirſting after righteouſneſs, love to enemies, univerſal benevolence to mankind: and, on the other hand, there is nothing at all vicious, or worthy of diſpraiſe, in the moſt ſordid, beaſtly, malignant, deliviſh diſpoſitions; in being ungrateful, profane, habitually hating God, and things ſacred and holy; or in being moſt treacherous, envious, and cruel towards men. For all theſe things are *diſpoſitions* and *inclinations* of the heart. And in ſhort, there is no ſuch thing as any virtuous or vicious *quality of mind*; no ſuch thing as inherent virtue and holineſs, or vice and ſin: and the ſtronger thoſe Habits or diſpoſitions are, which uſed to be called virtuous and vicious, the further they are from being ſo indeed; the more violent men's luſts are, the more fixed their pride, envy, ingratitude and maliciouſneſs, ſtill the further are they from being blame-worthy. If there be a man that by his own repeated acts, or by any other means, is come to be of the moſt helliſh diſpoſition, deſperately inclined to treat his neighbours with injuriouſneſs, contempt and malignity; the further they ſhould be from any diſpoſition to be angry with him, or in the leaſt to blame him. So, on the other hand, if there be a perſon, who is of a moſt excellent ſpirit, ſtrongly inclining him to the moſt amiable actions, admirably meek, benevolent, &c. ſo much is he further from any thing rewardable or commendable. On which principles, the man Jeſus Chriſt was very far from being praiſe-worthy for thoſe acts of holineſs and kindneſs, which He performed, theſe propenſities being ſtrong in his heart. And above all, the infinitely holy and gra-

cious God is infinitely remote from any thing commendable, his good inclinations being infinitely strong, and He, therefore, at the utmost possible distance from being at liberty. And in all cases, the stronger the inclinations of any are to virtue, and the more they love it, the less virtuous they are; and the more they love wickedness, the less vicious.—Whether these things are agreeable to Scripture, let every Christian, and every man who has read the Bible, judge: and whether they are agreeable to common sense, let every one judge, that has human understanding in exercise.

And, if we pursue these principles, we shall find that virtue and vice are wholly excluded out of the world; and that there never was, nor ever can be any such thing as one or the other; either in God, angels or men. No propensity, disposition or Habit can be virtuous or vicious, as has been shewn; because they, so far as they take place, destroy the freedom of the Will, the foundation of all moral agency, and exclude all capacity of either Virtue or Vice. —And if Habits and dispositions themselves be not virtuous nor vicious, neither can the exercise of these dispositions be so: for the exercise of *bias* is not the exercise of *free self-determining Will*, and so there is no exercise of liberty in it. Consequently, no man is virtuous or vicious, either in being well or ill-disposed, nor in acting from a good or bad disposition. And whether this bias or disposition, be habitual or not, if it exists but a moment before the act of Will, which is the effect of it, it alters not the case, as to the necessity of the effect. Or if there be no previous disposition at all, either habitual or occasional, that determines the act, then it is not choice that determines it: it is therefore a contingence, that happens to the man, arising from nothing in him; and is necessary, as to any inclination or choice of his;

and, therefore, cannot make him either the better or worſe, any more than a tree is better than other trees, becauſe it oftener happens to be lit upon by a ſwan or nightingale: or a rock more vicious than other rocks, becauſe rattle-ſnakes have happened oftener to crawl over it. So that there is no Virtue or Vice in good or bad diſpoſitions, either fixed or tranſient; nor any Virtue or Vice in acting from any good or bad previous inclination; nor yet any virtue or vice, in acting wholly without any previous inclination. Where then ſhall we find room for Virtue or Vice?

Section VII.

Arminian *Notions of moral Agency inconſiſtent with all influence of* Motive *and* Inducement, *in either virtuous or vicious Actions.*

As *Arminian* notions of that liberty, which is eſſential to virtue or vice, are inconſiſtent with common ſenſe, in their being inconſiſtent with all virtuous and vicious habits and diſpoſitions; ſo they are no leſs ſo in their inconſiſtency with all influence of Motives in moral actions.

It is equally againſt thoſe notions of liberty of Will, whether there be, previous to the act of choice, a preponderancy of the inclination, or a preponderancy of thoſe circumſtances, which have a tendency to move the inclination. And, indeed, it comes to juſt the ſame thing; to ſay, the circumſtances of the mind are ſuch as tend to ſway and turn its inclination one way, is the ſame thing as to ſay, the inclination of the mind, as under ſuch circumſtances, tends that way.

Or if any think it moſt proper to ſay, that Motives

do alter the inclination, and give a new bias to the mind, it will not alter the case, as to the present argument. For if Motives operate by giving the mind an inclination, then they operate by destroying the mind's indifference, and laying it under a bias. But to do this, is to destroy the *Arminian* freedom: it is not to leave the Will to its own self-determination, but to bring it into subjection to the power of something extrinsic, which operates upon it, sways and determines it, previous to its own determination. So that what is done from Motive, cannot be either virtuous or vicious. And besides, if the acts of the Will are excited by Motives, those Motives are the *causes* of those acts of the Will; which makes the acts of the Will necessary; as effects necessarily follow the efficiency of the cause. And if the influence and power of the Motive causes the volition, then the influence of the Motive determines volition, and volition does not determine itself; and so is not free, in the sense of *Arminians*, (as has been largely shewn already) and consequently can be neither virtuous nor vicious.

The supposition, which has already been taken notice of as an insufficient evasion in other cases, would be, in like manner, impertinently alledged in this case; namely, the supposition that liberty consists in a power of suspending action for the present, in order to deliberation. If it should be said, though it be true, that the Will is under a necessity of finally following the strongest Motive; yet it may, for the present, forbear to act upon the Motive presented, till there has been opportunity thoroughly to consider it, and compare its real weight with the merit of other Motives. I answer as follows:

Here again, it must be remembered, that if determining thus to suspend and consider, be that act of the Will, wherein alone liberty is exercised, then in

this all virtue and vice muſt conſiſt; and the acts that follow this conſideration, and are the effects of it, being neceſſary, are no more virtuous or vicious than ſome good or bad events, which happen when they are faſt aſleep, and are the conſequences of what they did when they were awake. Therefore, I would here obſerve two things:

1. To ſuppoſe, that all virtue and vice, in every caſe, conſiſts in determining, whether to take time for conſideration or not, is not agreeable to common ſenſe. For, according to ſuch a ſuppoſition, the moſt horrid crimes, adultery, murder, ſodomy, blaſphemy, *&c.* do not at all conſiſt in the horrid nature of the things themſelves, but only in the neglect of thorough conſideration before they were perpetrated, which brings their viciouſneſs to a ſmall matter, and makes all crimes equal. If it be ſaid, that neglect of conſideration, when ſuch heinous evils are propoſed to choice, is worſe than in other caſes: I anſwer, this is inconſiſtent, as it ſuppoſes the very thing to be, which, at the ſame time, is ſuppoſed not to be; it ſuppoſes all moral evil, all viciouſneſs and heinouſneſs, does not conſiſt merely in the want of conſideration. It ſuppoſes ſome crimes *in themſelves*, in their *own nature*, to be more heinous than others, antecedent to conſideration or inconſideration, which lays the perſon under a previous obligation to conſider in ſome caſes more than others.

2. If it were ſo, that all virtue and vice, in every caſe, conſiſted only in the act of the Will, whereby it determines whether to conſider or no, it would not alter the caſe in the leaſt, as to the preſent argument. For ſtill in this act of the Will on this determination, it is induced by ſome Motive, and neceſſarily follows the ſtrongeſt Motive; and ſo is neceſſarily, even in that act wherein alone it is either virtuous or vicious.

One thing more I would obſerve, concerning the inconſiſtence of *Arminian* notions of moral agency with the influence of Motives.—I ſuppoſe none will deny, that it is poſſible for Motives to be ſet before the mind ſo powerful, and exhibited in ſo ſtrong a light, and under ſo advantageous circumſtances, as to be invincible; and ſuch as the mind cannot but yield to. In this caſe, *Arminians* will doubtleſs ſay, liberty is deſtroyed. And if ſo, then if Motives are exhibited with half ſo much power, they hinder liberty in proportion to their ſtrength, and go half-way towards deſtroying it. If a thouſand degrees of Motive aboliſh all liberty, then five hundred take it half away. If one degree of the influence of Motive does not at all infringe or diminiſh liberty, then no more do two degrees; for nothing doubled, is ſtill nothing. And if two degrees do not diminiſh the Will's liberty, no more do four, eight, ſixteen, or ſix thouſand. For nothing multiplied never ſo much, comes to but nothing. If there be nothing in the nature of Motive or moral ſuaſion, that is at all oppoſite to liberty, then the greateſt degree of it cannot hurt liberty. But if there be any thing in the nature of the thing, that is againſt liberty, then the leaſt degree of it hurts it in ſome degree; and conſequently hurts and diminiſhes virtue. If invincible Motives, to that action which is good, take away all the freedom of the act, and ſo all the virtue of it; then the more forcible the Motives are, ſo much the worſe, ſo much the leſs virtue; and the weaker the Motives are, the better for the cauſe of virtue; and none is beſt of all.

Now let it be conſidered, whether theſe things are agreeable to common ſenſe. If it ſhould be allowed, that there are ſome inſtances wherein the ſoul chooſes without any Motive, what virtue can there be in ſuch a choice? I am ſure, there is no prudence or

wiſdom in it. Such a choice is made for no good end; for it is for no end at all. If it were for any end, the view of the end would be the Motive exciting to the act; and if the act be for no good end, and ſo from no good aim, then there is no good intention in it; and, therefore, according to all our natural notions of virtue, no more virtue in it than in the motion of the ſmoke, which is driven to and fro by the wind, without any aim or end in the thing moved, and which knows not whether, nor why and wherefore, it is moved.

Corol. 1. By theſe things it appears, that the argument againſt the *Calviniſts*, taken from the uſe of counſels, exhortations, invitations, expoſtulations, *&c.* ſo much inſiſted on by *Arminians*, is truly againſt themſelves. For theſe things can operate no other way to any good effect, than as in them is exhibited motive and inducement, tending to excite and determine the acts of the Will. But it follows, on their principles, that the acts of Will excited by ſuch cauſes, cannot be virtuous; becauſe, ſo far as they are from theſe, they are not from the Will's ſelf-determining power. Hence it will follow, that it is not worth the while to offer any arguments to perſuade men to any virtuous volition or voluntary action; it is in vain to ſet before them the wiſdom and amiableneſs of ways of virtue, or the odiouſneſs and folly of ways of vice. This notion of liberty and moral agency fruſtrates all endeavours to draw men to virtue by inſtruction or perſuaſion, precept or example: for though theſe things may induce men to what is *materially* virtuous, yet at the ſame time they take away the *form* of virtue, becauſe they deſtroy liberty; as they, by their own power, put the Will out of its equilibrium, determine and turn the ſcale, and take the work of ſelf-determining power out of its hands. And the clearer the inſtructions that are

given, the more powerful the arguments that are uſed, and the more moving the perſuaſions or examples, the more likely they are to fruſtrate their own deſign; becauſe they have ſo much the greater tendency to put the Will out of its balance, to hinder its freedom of ſelf-determination; and ſo to exclude the very form of virtue, and the eſſence of whatſoever is praiſe-worthy.

So it clearly follows, from theſe principles, that God has no hand in any man's virtue, nor does at all promote it, either by a phyſical or moral influence; that none of the moral methods He uſes with men to promote virtue in the world, have tendency to the attainment of that end; that all the inſtructions, which He has given to men, from the beginning of the world to this day, by Prophets or Apoſtles, or by His Son Jeſus Chriſt; that all his counſels, invitations, promiſes, threatenings, warnings and expoſtulations; that all means He has uſed with men, in ordinances, or providences; yea, all influences of his Spirit, ordinary and extraordinary, have had no tendency at all to excite any one virtuous act of the mind, or to promote any thing morally good or commendable, in any reſpect. For there is no way that theſe or any other means can promote virtue, but one of theſe three. Either (1.) By a phyſical operation on the heart. But all effects that are wrought in men this way, have no virtue in them, by the concurring voice of all *Arminians*. Or, (2.) Morally, by exhibiting motives to the underſtanding, to excite good acts in the Will. But it has been demonſtrated, that volitions, which are excited by motives, are neceſſary, and not excited by a ſelf-moving power; and therefore, by their principles, there is no virtue in them. Or, (3.) By merely giving the Will an opportunity to determine itſelf concerning the objects propoſed, either to chooſe or reject, by its

own uncaused, unmoved, uninfluenced self-determination. And if this be all, then all those means do no more to promote virtue than vice: for they do nothing but give the Will opportunity to determine itself *either way*, either to good or bad, without laying it under any bias to either: and so there is really as much of an opportunity given to determine in favor of evil, as of good.

Thus that horrid blasphemous consequence will certainly follow from the *Arminian* doctrine, which they charge on others; namely, that God acts an inconsistent part in using so many counsels, warnings, invitations, intreaties, *&c.* with sinners, to induce them to forsake sin, and turn to the ways of virtue; and that all are insincere and fallacious. It will follow, from their doctrine, that God does these things when he knows, at the same time, that they have no manner of tendency to promote the effect He seems to aim at; yea, knows that if they have any influence, this very influence will be inconsistent with such an effect, and will prevent it. But what an imputation of insincerity would this fix on Him, who is infinitely holy and true!—So that their's is the doctrine which, if pursued in its consequences, does horribly reflect on the Most High, and fix on Him the charge of hypocrisy; and not the doctrine of the *Calvinists;* according to their frequent, and vehement exclamations and invectives.

Corol. 2. From what has been observed in this section, it again appears, that *Arminian* principles and notions, when fairly examined and pursued in their demonstrable consequences, do evidently shut all virtue out of the world, and make it impossible that there should ever be any such thing, in any case; or that any such thing should ever be conceived of. For, by these principles, the very notion of virtue or vice implies absurdity and contradiction.—

For it is absurd in itself, and contrary to common sense, to suppose a virtuous act of mind without any good intention or aim; and, by their principles, it is absurd to suppose a virtuous act with a good intention or aim; for to act for an end, is to act from a Motive. So that if we rely on these principles, there can be no virtuous act with a good design and end; and it is self-evident, there can be none without: consequently there can be no virtuous act at all.

Corol. 3. It is manifest, that *Arminian* notions of moral agency, and *the being* of a faculty of Will, cannot consist together; and that if there be any such thing as either a virtuous or vicious act, it cannot be an act of the Will; no Will can be at all concerned in it. For that act which is performed without inclination, without Motive, without end, must be performed without any concern of the Will. To suppose an act of the Will without these, implies a contradiction. If the soul in its act has no motive or end; then, in that act (as was observed before) it seeks nothing, goes after nothing, exerts no inclination to any thing; and this implies, that in that act it desires nothing, and chooses nothing; so that there is no act of choice in the case: and that is as much as to say, there is no act of Will in the case. Which very effectually shuts all vicious and virtuous acts out of the universe; in as much as, according to this, there can be no vicious or virtuous act wherein the Will is concerned; and according to the plainest dictates of reason, and the light of nature, and also the principles of *Arminians* themselves, there can be no virtuous or vicious act wherein the Will is not concerned. And therefore there is no room for any virtuous or vicious acts at all.

Corol. 4. If none of the moral actions of intelligent beings are influenced by either previous Inclination or Motive, another strange thing will follow;

and this is, that God not only cannot foreknow any of the future moral actions of his creatures, but he can make no conjecture, can give no probable gueſs concerning them. For all conjecture in things of this nature, muſt depend on ſome diſcerning or apprehenſion of theſe two things, *previous Diſpoſition* and *Motive*, which, as has been obſerved, *Arminian* notions of moral agency, in their real conſequence, altogether exclude.

PART IV.

Wherein the chief grounds of the reaſonings of Arminians, *in ſupport and defence of the forementioned notions of* Liberty, moral Agency, *&c. and againſt the oppoſite doctrine, are conſidered.*

SECTION I.

The Eſſence *of the Virtue and Vice of Diſpoſitions of the Heart, and Acts of the Will, lies not in their* Cauſe, *but their* Nature.

ONE main foundation of the reaſons which are brought to eſtabliſh the forementioned notions of liberty, virtue, vice, *&c.* is a ſuppoſition, that the virtuouſneſs of the diſpoſitions, or acts of the Will, conſiſts not in the nature of theſe diſpoſitions or acts, but wholly in the origin or Cauſe of them: ſo that if the diſpoſition of the mind, or acts of the Will, be never ſo good, yet if the Cauſe of the diſpoſition or act be not our virtue, there is nothing virtuous or praiſe-worthy in it; and, on the contrary, if the Will, in its inclination or acts, be never ſo bad, yet, unleſs it ariſes from ſomething that is our vice or fault, there is nothing vicious or blame-worthy in it. Hence their grand objection and pretended demonſtration, or ſelf-evidence, againſt any virtue and commendableneſs, or vice and blame-worthineſs, of thoſe habits or acts of the Will, which are not from ſome virtuous or vicious determination of the Will itſelf.

Now, if this matter be well conſidered, it will appear to be altogether a miſtake, yea, a groſs abſurdity; and that it is moſt certain, that if there be any ſuch things as a virtuous or vicious diſpoſition, or volition of mind, the virtuouſneſs or viciouſneſs of them conſiſts not in the origin or cauſe of theſe things, but in the nature of them.

If the Eſſence of virtuouſneſs or commendableneſs, and of viciouſneſs or fault, does not lie in the nature of the diſpoſitions or acts of mind, which are ſaid to be our virtue or our fault, but in their Cauſe, then it is certain it lies no where at all. Thus, for inſtance, if the vice of a *vicious* act of Will, lies not in the Nature of the act, but the Cauſe; ſo that its being of a bad Nature will not make it at all our fault, unleſs it ariſes from ſome faulty determination of our's, as its Cauſe, or ſomething in us that is our fault: then, for the ſame reaſon, neither can the viciouſneſs of that Cauſe lie in the nature of the thing itſelf, but in *its* Cauſe: that evil determination of our's is not our fault, merely becauſe it is of a bad Nature, unleſs it ariſes from ſome Cauſe in us that is our fault. And when we are come to this higher Cauſe, ſtill the reaſon of the thing holds good; tho' this Cauſe be of a bad Nature, yet we are not at all to blame on that account, unleſs it ariſes from ſomething faulty in us. Nor yet can blame-worthineſs lie in the Nature of *this Cauſe*, but in the Cauſe of *that*. And thus we muſt drive faultineſs back from ſtep to ſtep, from a lower Cauſe to a higher, *in infinitum*: and that is, thoroughly to baniſh it from the world, and to allow it no poſſibility of exiſtence any where in the univerſality of things. On theſe principles, vice, or moral evil, cannot conſiſt in any thing that is an *effect*; becauſe *fault* does not conſiſt in the Nature of things, but in their Cauſe; as well as becauſe effects are neceſſary, being unavoidably

connected with their Cause: therefore the Cause only is to blame. And so it follows, that faultiness can lie *only in that Cause*, which is a *Cause only*, and no effect of any thing. Nor yet can it lie in this; for then it must lie in the Nature of the thing itself; not in its being from any determination of our's, nor any thing faulty in us which is the Cause, nor indeed from any Cause at all; for, by the supposition, it is no effect, and *has no Cause*. And thus, he that will maintain, it is not the Nature of habits or acts of Will that makes them virtuous or faulty, but the Cause, must immediately run himself out of his own assertion; and in maintaining it, will insensibly contradict and deny it.

This is certain, that if effects are vicious and faulty, not from their Nature, or from any thing inherent in them, but because they are from a bad Cause, it must be on account of the *badness* of the Cause: a bad effect in the Will must be bad, because the Cause is *bad*, or *of an evil Nature*, or *has badness* as a quality inherent in it: and a *good* effect in the Will must be *good*, by reason of the *goodness* of the Cause, or its being *of a good kind and Nature*. And if this be what is meant, the very supposition of fault and praise lying not in the Nature of the thing, but the Cause, contradicts itself, and does at least resolve the Essence of virtue and vice unto the Nature of things, and supposes it originally to consist in that.—And if a caviller has a mind to run from the absurdity, by saying, "No, the fault of the thing, "which is the Cause, lies not in this, that the Cause "itself is *of an evil Nature*, but that the Cause is evil "in that sense, that it is from another bad Cause." Still the absurdity will follow him; for, if so then the Cause before charged is at once acquitted, and all the blame must be laid to the higher Cause, and must consist in that's being *evil* or *of an evil Nature*.

So now, we are come again to lay the blame of the thing blame-worthy, to the Nature of the thing, and not to the Cauſe. And if any is ſo fooliſh as to go higher ſtill, and aſcend from ſtep to ſtep, till he is come to that, which is the firſt Cauſe concerned in the whole affair, and will ſay, all the blame lies in that; then, at laſt, he muſt be forced to own, that the faultineſs of the thing, which he ſuppoſes alone blame-worthy, lies wholly *in the Nature* of the thing, and not in the original or Cauſe of it; for the ſuppoſition is, that it has no original, it is determined by no act of our's, is cauſed by nothing faulty in us, being abſolutely *without any Cauſe.* And ſo the race is at an end, but the evader is taken in his flight.

It is agreeable to the natural notions of mankind, that moral evil, with its deſert of diſlike and abhorrence, and all its other ill-deſervings, conſiſts in a certain *deformity* in the *Nature* of certain diſpoſitions of the heart, and acts of the Will; and not in the deformity of *ſomething elſe,* diverſe from the very thing itſelf, which deſerves abhorrence, ſuppoſed to be the Cauſe of it. Which would be abſurd, becauſe that would be to ſuppoſe a thing, that is innocent and not evil, is truly evil and faulty, becauſe another thing is evil. It implies a contradiction; for it would be to ſuppoſe the very thing, which is morally evil and blame-worthy, is innocent and not blame-worthy; but that ſomething elſe, which is its Cauſe, is only to blame. To ſay, that vice does not conſiſt in the thing which is vicious, but in its Cauſe, is the ſame as to ſay, that vice does not conſiſt in vice, but in that which produces it.

It is true, a Cauſe may be to blame, for being the Cauſe of vice: it may be wickedneſs in the Cauſe, that it produces wickedneſs. But it would imply a contradiction, to ſuppoſe that theſe two are the ſame

individual wickedneſs. The wicked act of the Cauſe in producing wickedneſs, is one wickedneſs; and the wickedneſs produced, if there be any produced, is another. And therefore, the wickedneſs of the latter does not lie in the former, but is diſtinct from it; and the wickedneſs of both lies in the *evil Nature* of the things, which are wicked.

The thing, which makes ſin baneful, is that by which it deſerves puniſhment; which is but the expreſſion of hatred. And that, which renders virtue lovely, is the ſame with that, on the account of which, it is fit to receive praiſe and reward; which are but the expreſſion of eſteem and love. But that which makes vice hateful, is its hateful Nature; and that which renders virtue lovely, is its amiable Nature. It is a certain beauty or deformity that are *inherent* in that good or evil Will, which is the *ſoul* of virtue and vice (and not in the *occaſion* of it) which is their worthineſs of eſteem or diſeſteem, praiſe or diſpraiſe, according to the common ſenſe of mankind. If the Cauſe or occaſion of the riſe of an hateful diſpoſition or act of Will, be alſo hateful; ſuppoſe another antecedent evil Will; that is entirely another ſin, and deſerves puniſhment by itſelf, under a diſtinct conſideration. There is worthineſs of diſpraiſe in the Nature of an evil volition, and not wholly in ſome foregoing act, which is its Cauſe; otherwiſe the evil volition, which is the effect, is no moral evil, any more than ſickneſs, or ſome other natural calamity, which ariſes from a Cauſe morally evil.

Thus, for inſtance, ingratitude is hateful and worthy of diſpraiſe, according to common ſenſe; not becauſe ſomething is bad, or worſe than ingratitude, was the Cauſe that produced it; but becauſe it is hateful in itſelf, by its own inherent deformity. So the love of virtue is amiable, and worthy of praiſe, not merely becauſe ſomething elſe went before this

love of virtue in our minds, which cauſed it to take place there; for inſtance, our own choice; we choſe to love virtue, and, by ſome method or other, wrought ourſelves into the love of it; but becauſe of the amiableneſs and condeſcendency of ſuch a diſpoſition and inclination of heart. If that *was* the caſe, that we *did* chooſe to love virtue, and ſo produced that love in ourſelves, this choice itſelf could be no otherwiſe amiable or praiſe-worthy, than as love to virtue, or ſome other amiable inclination, was exerciſed and implied in it. If that choice was amiable at all, it muſt be ſo on account of ſome amiable quality in the nature of the choice. If we choſe to love virtue, not in love to virtue, or any thing that was good, and exerciſed no ſort of good diſpoſition in the choice, the choice itſelf was not virtuous, nor worthy of any praiſe, according to common ſenſe, becauſe the choice was not of a *good Nature.*

It may not be improper here to take notice of ſomething ſaid by an author, that has lately made a mighty noiſe in America. "A neceſſary holineſs "(ſays he*) is no holineſs.—Adam could not be "originally created in righteouſneſs and true holi- "neſs, becauſe he muſt *chooſe* to be righteous, *before* "he could be righteous. And therefore he muſt "exiſt, he muſt be created, yea, he muſt exerciſe "thought and reflection, before he was righteous." There is much more to the ſame effect in that place, and alſo in p. 437, 438, 439, 440. If theſe things are ſo, it will certainly follow, that the firſt chooſing to be righteous is no righteous choice; there is no righteouſneſs or holineſs in it; becauſe no chooſing to be righteous goes before it. For he plainly ſpeaks of *chooſing to be righteous,* as what *muſt go before righteouſneſs:* and that which follows the choice, being the effect of the choice, cannot be righteouſneſs

* Scrip. Doc. of *Original Sin,* p. 180. 3d Edit.

or holineſs: for an effect is a thing neceſſary, and cannot prevent the influence or efficacy of its Cauſe; and therefore is unavoidably dependent upon the Cauſe: and he ſays, *a neceſſary holineſs is no holineſs.* So that neither can a choice of righteouſneſs be righteouſneſs or holineſs, nor can any thing that is conſequent on that choice, and the effect of it, be righteouſneſs or holineſs; nor can any thing that is without choice, be righteouſneſs or holineſs. So that by his ſcheme, all righteouſneſs and holineſs is at once ſhut out of the world, and no door left open, by which it can ever poſſibly enter into the world.

I ſuppoſe, the way that men came to entertain this abſurd inconſiſtent notion, with reſpect to *internal inclinations and volitions* themſelves, (or notions that imply it,) *viz.* that the Eſſence of their moral good or evil lies not in their Nature, but their Cauſe; was, that it is indeed a very plain dictate of common ſenſe, that it is ſo with reſpect to all *outward actions*, and ſenſible motions of the body; that the moral good or evil of them does not lie at all in the motions themſelves; which, taken by themſelves, are nothing of a moral Nature; and the Eſſence of all the moral good or evil that concerns them, lies in thoſe internal diſpoſitions and volitions, which are the Cauſe of them. Now, being always uſed to determine this, without heſitation or diſpute, concerning *external Actions;* which are the things, that in the common uſe of language are ſignified by ſuch phraſes, as men's *actions*, or their *doings;* hence, when they come to ſpeak of volitions, and *internal exerciſes* of their inclinations, under the ſame denomination of their *actions*, or *what they do*, they unwarily determined the caſe muſt alſo be the ſame with theſe, as with *external actions;* not conſidering the vaſt difference in the Nature of the caſe.

If any ſhall ſtill object and ſay, why is it not ne-

ceſſary that the Cauſe ſhould be conſidered, in order to determine whether any thing be worthy of blame or praiſe? Is it agreeable to reaſon and common ſenſe, that a man is to be praiſed or blamed for that, which he is not the Cauſe or author of, and has no hand in?

I anſwer, ſuch phraſes as *being the Cauſe*, *being the author*, *having a hand*, and the like, are ambiguous. They are moſt vulgarly underſtood for being the deſigning voluntary Cauſe, or Cauſe by antecedent choice: and it is moſt certain, that men are not, in this ſenſe, the Cauſes or authors of the firſt act of their Wills, in any caſe; as certain as any thing is, or ever can be; for nothing can be more certain, than that a thing is not before it is, nor a thing of the ſame kind before the firſt thing of that kind; and ſo no choice before the firſt choice. As the phraſe, *being the author*, may be underſtood not of being the producer by an antecedent act of Will; but as a perſon may be ſaid to be the author of the act of Will itſelf, by his being the immediate agent, or the being that *is acting*, or *in exerciſe* in that act; if the phraſe of *being the author*, is uſed to ſignify this, then doubtleſs common ſenſe requires men's being the authors of their own acts of Will, in order to their being eſteemed worthy of praiſe or diſpraiſe, on account of them. And common ſenſe teaches, that they muſt be the authors of *external actions*, in the former ſenſe, namely, their being the Cauſes of them by an act of Will or choice, in order to their being juſtly blamed or praiſed: but it teaches no ſuch thing with reſpect to the acts of the Will themſelves. But this may appear more manifeſt by the things, which will be obſerved in the following ſection.

Section II.

The Falseness and Inconsistence of that metaphysical Notion of Action *and* Agency, *which seems to be generally entertained by the Defenders of the* Arminian *Doctrine concerning Liberty, moral Agency,* &c.

One thing that is made very much a ground of argument and supposed demonstration by *Arminians*, in defence of the forementioned principles, concerning moral Agency, virtue, vice, &c. is their metaphysical notion of *Agency* and *Action*. They say, unless the soul has a self-determining power, it has no power of *Action*; if its volitions be not caused by itself, but are excited and determined by some extrinsic cause, they cannot be the soul's own *acts*; and that the soul cannot be *active*, but must be wholly *passive*, in those effects which it is the subject of necessarily, and not from its own free determination.

Mr. Chubb lays the foundation of his scheme of liberty, and of his arguments to support it, very much in this position, that *man is an Agent, and capable of Action*. Which doubtless is true: but *self-determination* belongs to his notion of *Action*, and is the very essence of it. Whence he infers, that it is impossible for a man to act and be acted upon, in the same thing, at the same time; and that nothing, that is an Action, can be the effect of the Action of another: and he insists, that a *necessary Agent*, or an Agent that is necessarily determined to act, is a *plain contradiction*.

But those are a precarious sort of demonstrations, which men build on the meaning that they arbitrarily affix to a word; especially when that meaning

is abſtruſe, inconſiſtent, and entirely diverſe from the original ſenſe of the word in common ſpeech.

That the meaning of the word *Action*, as Mr. Chubb and many others uſe it, is utterly unintelligible and inconſiſtent, is manifeſt, becauſe it belongs to their notion of an Action, that it is ſomething wherein is no paſſion or paſſiveneſs; that is (according to their ſenſe of paſſiveneſs) it is under the power, influence or action of no cauſe. And this implies, that Action has no cauſe, and is no effect; for to be an effect implies *paſſiveneſs*, or the being ſubject to the power and Action of its cauſe. And yet they hold, that the mind's *Action* is the effect of its own determination, yea, the mind's free and voluntary determination; which is the ſame with free choice. So that Action is the effect of ſomething preceding, even a preceding act of choice: and conſequently, in this effect the mind is paſſive, ſubject to the power and Action of the preceding cauſe, which is the foregoing choice, and therefore cannot be active. So that here we have this contradiction, that Action is always the effect of foregoing choice; and therefore cannot be Action; becauſe it is *paſſive* to the power of that preceding cauſal choice; and the mind cannot be active and paſſive in the ſame thing, at the ſame time. Again, they ſay, neceſſity is utterly inconſiſtent with Action, and a neceſſary Action is a contradiction; and ſo their notion of Action implies contingence, and excludes all neceſſity. And therefore, their notion of Action implies, that it has no neceſſary dependence or connexion with any thing foregoing; for ſuch a dependence or connexion excludes contingence, and implies neceſſity. And yet their notion of Action implies neceſſity, and ſuppoſes that it is neceſſary, and cannot be contingent. For they ſuppoſe, that whatever is properly called Action, muſt be deter-

mined by the Will and free choice; and this is as much as to ſay, that it muſt be neceſſary, being dependent upon, and determined by ſomething foregoing; namely, a foregoing act of choice. Again, it belongs to their notion of Action, of that which is a proper and mere act, that it is the beginning of motion, or of exertion of power; but yet it is implied in their notion of Action, that it is not the beginning of motion or exertion of power, but is conſequent and dependent on a preceding exertion of power, *viz.* the power of Will and choice: for they ſay there is no proper Action but what is freely *choſen;* or, which is the ſame thing, determined by a foregoing act of free choice. But if any of them ſhall ſee cauſe to deny this, and ſay they hold no ſuch thing as that every Action is choſen or determined by a foregoing choice; but that the very firſt exertion of Will only, undetermined by any preceding act, is properly called Action; then I ſay, ſuch a man's notion of Action implies neceſſity; for what the mind is the ſubject of, without the determination of its own previous choice, it is the ſubject of neceſſarily, as to any hand, that free choice has in the affair, and, without any ability, the mind has to prevent it, by any Will or election of its own; becauſe by the ſuppoſition it precludes all previous acts of the Will or choice in the caſe, which might prevent it. So that it is again, in this other way, implied in their notion of act, that it is both neceſſary and not neceſſary. Again, it belongs to their notion of an *act*, that it is no effect of a pre-determining bias or preponderation, but ſprings immediately out of indifference; and this implies, that it cannot be from foregoing choice, which is foregoing preponderation: if it be not habitual, but occaſional, yet if it cauſes the act, it is truly previous, efficacious and determining. And yet, at the ſame time, it is eſſential to their notion

of the act, that it is what the agent is the author of freely and voluntarily, and that is, by previous choice and design.

So that, according to their notion of the act, considered with regard to its consequences, these following things are all essential to it, *viz.* That it should be necessary, and not necessary; that it should be from a cause, and no cause; that it should be the fruit of choice and design, and not the fruit of choice and design; that it should be the beginning of motion or exertion, and yet consequent on previous exertion; that it should be before it is; that it should spring immediately out of indifference and equilibrium, and yet be the effect of preponderation; that it should be self-originated, and also have its original from something else; that it is what the mind causes itself, of its own Will, and can produce or prevent, according to its choice or pleasure, and yet what the mind has no power to prevent, precluding all previous choice in the affair.

So that an act, according to their metaphysical notion of it, is something of which there is no idea: it is nothing but a confusion of the mind, excited by words without any distinct meaning, and is an absolute non-entity; and that in two respects: (1.) There is nothing in the world that ever was, is, or can be, to answer the things which must belong to its description, according to what they suppose to be essential to it. And (2.) There neither is, nor ever was, nor can be, any notion or idea to answer the word, as they use and explain it. For if we should suppose any such notion, it would many ways destroy itself. But it is impossible any idea or notion should subsist in the mind, whose very nature and essence, which constitutes it, destroys it. If some learned philosopher, who had been abroad, in giving an account of the curious observations he had made

in his travels, ſhould ſay, "He had been in *Terra* "*del Fuego*, and there had ſeen an animal, which he "calls by a certain name, that begat and brought "forth itſelf, and yet had a ſire and dam diſtinct "from itſelf; that it had an appetite, and was hun- "gry before it had a being; that his maſter, who "led him, and governed him at his pleaſure, was "always governed by him, and driven by him where "he pleaſed; that when he moved, he always took "a ſtep before the firſt ſtep; that he went with his "head firſt, and yet always went tail foremoſt; and "this, though he had neither head nor tail:" it would be no impudence at all, to tell ſuch a travel- ler, though a learned man, that he himſelf had no notion or idea of ſuch an animal, as he gave an ac- count of, and never had, nor ever would have.

As the forementioned notion of Action is very in- conſiſtent, ſo it is wholly diverſe from the original meaning of the word. The more uſual ſignification of it, in vulgar ſpeech, ſeems to be ſome *motion*, or *exerciſe of power*, that is voluntary, or that is *the effect of the Will*; and is uſed in the ſame ſenſe as *doing*: and moſt commonly it is uſed to ſignify *outward Ac- tions*. So *thinking* is often diſtinguiſhed from *acting*; and *deſiring* and *willing*, from *doing*.

Beſides this more uſual and proper ſignification of the word *Action*, there are other ways in which the word is uſed, that are leſs proper, which yet have place in common ſpeech. Oftentimes it is uſed to ſignify ſome motion or alteration in inanimate things, with relation to ſome object and effect. So the ſpring of a watch is ſaid to *act* upon the chain and wheels; the ſun beams, to act upon plants and trees; and the fire, to act upon wood. Sometimes the word is uſed to ſignify motions, alterations, and ex- ertion of power, which are ſeen in corporeal things, *conſidered abſolutely*; eſpecially when theſe motions

ſeem to ariſe from ſome internal cauſe which is *hidden;* ſo that they have a greater reſemblance of thoſe motions of our bodies, which are the effects of natural volition, or inviſible exertions of Will. So the fermentation of liquor, the operations of the loadſtone, and of electrical bodies, are called the *Action* of theſe things. And ſometimes the word *Action* is uſed to ſignify the exerciſe of thought, or of Will and inclination: ſo meditating, loving, hating, inclining, diſinclining, chooſing and refuſing, may be ſometimes called acting; though more rarely (unleſs it be by philoſophers and metaphyſicians) than in any of the other ſenſes.

But the word is never uſed in vulgar ſpeech in that ſenſe which *Arminian* divines uſe it in, namely, for the ſelf-determinate exerciſe of the Will, or an exertion of the ſoul that ariſes without any neceſſary connexion, with any thing foregoing. If a man does ſomething voluntarily, or as the effect of his choice, then in the moſt proper ſenſe, and as the word is moſt originally and commonly uſed, he is ſaid to *act:* but whether that choice or volition be ſelf-determined, or no, whether it be connected with foregoing habitual bias, whether it be the certain effect of the ſtrongeſt motive, or ſome intrinſic cauſe, never comes into conſideration in the meaning of the word.

And if the word *Action* is arbitrarily uſed by ſome men otherwiſe, to ſuit ſome ſcheme of metaphyſic or morality, no argument can reaſonably be founded on ſuch a uſe of this term, to prove any thing but their own pleaſure. For divines and philoſophers ſtrenuouſly to urge ſuch arguments, as though they were ſufficient to ſupport and demonſtrate a whole ſcheme of moral philoſophy and divinity, is certainly to erect a mighty edifice on the ſand, or rather on a ſhadow. And though it may now perhaps, through

custom, have become natural for them to use the word in this sense (if that may be called a sense or meaning, which is inconsistent with itself) yet this does not prove, that it is agreeable to the natural notions men have of things, or that there can be any thing in the creation that should answer such a meaning. And though they appeal to experience, yet the truth is, that men are so far from experiencing any such thing, that it is impossible for them to have any conception of it.

If it should be objected, that *Action* and *Passion* are doubtless words of a contrary signification; but to suppose that the agent, in its Action, is under the power and influence of something intrinsic, is to confound Action and passion, and make them the same thing.

I answer, that Action and passion are doubtless, as they are sometimes used, words of opposite signification; but not as signifying opposite *existences*, but only opposite *relations*. The words *cause* and *effect*, are terms of opposite signification; but, nevertheless, if I assert, that the same thing may, at the same time, in different respects and relations, be both *cause* and *effect*, this will not prove that I confound the terms. The soul may be both *active* and *passive* in the same thing in different respects; *active* with relation to one thing, and *passive* with relation to another. The word *passion*, when set in opposition to *Action*, or rather *Activeness*, is merely a relative; it signifies no effect or cause, nor any proper existence; but is the same with *passiveness*, or a being passive, or a being acted upon by some thing. Which is a mere relation of a thing to some power or force exerted by some cause, producing some effect in it, or upon it. And *Action*, when set properly in opposition to *passion*, or *passiveness*, is no real existence; it is not the same with *AN Action*, but is a mere relation: it is

the *activeneſs* of ſomething on another thing, being the oppoſite relation to the other, *viz.* a relation of power, or force, exerted by ſome cauſe, towards another thing, which is the ſubject of the effect of that power. Indeed, the word *Action* is frequently uſed to ſignify ſomething not merely *relative*, but more *abſolute*, and a real exiſtence; as when we ſay *an Action;* when the word is not uſed tranſitively, but abſolutely, for ſome motion or exerciſe of body or mind, without any relation to any object or effect: and as uſed thus, it is not properly the oppoſite of *paſſion;* which ordinarily ſignifies nothing abſolute, but merely the *relation* of *being acted upon.* And therefore, if the word *Action* be uſed in the like relative ſenſe, then Action and paſſion are only two contrary relations. And it is no abſurdity to ſuppoſe, that contrary relations may belong to the ſame thing, at the ſame time, with reſpect to different things. So to ſuppoſe, that there are acts of the ſoul by which a man voluntarily moves, and acts upon objects, and produces effects, which yet themſelves are effects of ſomething elſe, and wherein the ſoul itſelf is the object of ſomething acting upon, and influencing that, do not at all confound Action and paſſion. The words may nevertheleſs be properly of oppoſite ſignification: there may be as true and real a difference between *acting* and being *cauſed to act*, though we ſhould ſuppoſe the ſoul to be both in the ſame volition, as there is between *living* and *being quickened*, or *made to live.* It is no more a contradiction to ſuppoſe that Action may be the effect of ſome other cauſe, beſides the agent, or being that acts, than to ſuppoſe, that life may be the effect of ſome other cauſe, beſides the liver, or the being that lives, in whom life is cauſed to be.

The thing which has led men into this inconſiſtent notion of Action, when applied to volition, as

though it were essential to this internal Action, that the agent should be self-determined in it, and that the Will should be the cause of it, was probably this; that according to the sense of mankind, and the common use of language, it is so with respect to men's external actions; which are what originally, and according to the vulgar use and most proper sense of the word, called *Actions*. Men in these are self-directed, self-determined, and their Wills are the cause of the motions of their bodies, and the external things that are done; so that unless men do them voluntarily, and of choice, and the Action be determined by their antecedent volition, it is no Action or doing of theirs. Hence some metaphysicians have been led unwarily, but exceeding absurdly, to suppose the same concerning volition itself, that *that* also must be determined by the Will; which is to be determined by antecedent volition, as the motion of the body is; not considering the contradiction it implies.

But it is very evident, that in the metaphysical distinction between Action and passion, (though long since become common and the general vogue) due care has not been taken to conform language to the nature of things, or to any distinct clear ideas. As it is in innumerable other philosophical, metaphisical terms, used in these disputes; which has occasioned inexpressible difficulty, contention, error and confusion.

And thus probably it came to be thought, that necessity was inconsistent with Action, as these terms are applied to volition. First, these terms *Action* and *Necessity*, are changed from their original meaning, as signifying external voluntary Action and constraint, (in which meaning they are evidently inconsistent) to signify quite other things, *viz.* volition itself, and certainty of existence. And when the

change of ſignification is made, care is not taken to make proper allowances and abatements for the difference of ſenſe; but ſtill the ſame things are unwarily attributed to *Action* and *Neceſſity*, in the new meaning of the words, which plainly belonged to them in their firſt ſenſe; and on this ground, maxims are eſtabliſhed without any real foundation, as though they were the moſt certain truths, and the moſt evident dictates of reaſon.

But however ſtrenuouſly it is maintained, that what is neceſſary cannot be properly called Action, and that a neceſſary Action is a contradiction, yet it is probable there are few *Arminian* divines, who, if thoroughly tried, would ſtand to theſe principles. They will allow, that God is, in the higheſt ſenſe, an active Being, and the higheſt Fountain of Life and Action; and they would not probably deny, that thoſe, that are called God's acts of righteouſneſs, holineſs and faithfulneſs, are truly and properly God's *acts*, and God is really a holy *Agent* in them; and yet, I truſt, they will not deny, that God neceſſarily acts juſtly and faithfully, and that it is impoſſible for Him to act unrighteouſly and unholily.

Section III.

The Reaſons why ſome think it contrary to common Senſe, *to ſuppoſe thoſe Things which are* neceſſary, *to be worthy of either* Praiſe *or* Blame.

It is abundantly affirmed and urged by *Arminian* writers, that it is contrary to *common Senſe*, and the natural notions and apprehenſions of mankind, to ſuppoſe otherwiſe than that neceſſity (making no diſtinction between natural and moral neceſſity) is in-

consistent with Virtue and Vice, Praise and Blame, Reward and Punishment. And their arguments from hence have been greatly triumphed in; and have been not a little perplexing to many, who have been friendly to the truth, as clearly revealed in the holy Scriptures: it has seemed to them indeed difficult, to reconcile *Calvinistic* doctrines with the notions men commonly have of justice and equity. And the true reasons of it seem to be these that follow.

I. It is indeed a very plain dictate of common Sense, that natural necessity is wholly inconsistent with just Praise or Blame. If men do things which in themselves are very good, fit to be brought to pass, and very happy effects, properly against their Wills, and cannot help it; or do them from a necessity that is without their Wills, or with which their Wills have no concern or connexion; then it is a plain dictate of common Sense, that it is none of their virtue, nor any moral good in them; and that they are not worthy to be rewarded or praised; or at all esteemed, honored or loved on that account. And, on the other hand, that if, from like necessity, they do those things which in themselves are very unhappy and pernicious, and do them because they cannot help it; the necessity is such, that it is all one whether they Will them, or no; and the reason why they are done, is from necessity only, and not from their Wills; it is a very plain dictate of common Sense, that they are not at all to blame; there is no vice, fault, or moral evil at all in the effect done; nor are they, who are thus necessitated, in any wise worthy to be punished, hated, or in the least disrespected, on that account.

In like manner, if things, in themselves good and desirable, are absolutely impossible, with a natural impossibility, the universal reason of mankind teaches,

that this *wholly and perfectly* excuſes perſons in their not doing them.

And it is alſo a plain dictate of common Senſe, that if the doing things, in themſelves good, or avoiding things, in themſelves evil, is not *abſolutely impoſſible*, with ſuch a natural impoſſibility, but very *difficult*, with a natural difficulty; that is, a difficulty prior *to*, and not at all conſiſting *in* Will and inclination itſelf, and which would remain the ſame, let the inclination be what it will; then a perſon's neglect or omiſſion is excuſed *in ſome meaſure*, though not wholly; his ſin is leſs aggravated, than if the thing to be done were eaſy. And if inſtead of difficulty and hinderance, there be a contrary natural propenſity in the ſtate of things, to the thing to be done, or the effect to be brought to paſs, abſtracted from any conſideration of the inclination of the heart; though the propenſity be not ſo great as to amount to a natural neceſſity; yet being ſome approach to it, ſo that the doing the good thing be very much from this natural tendency in the ſtate of things, and but little from a good inclination; then it is a dictate of common Senſe, that there is ſo much the leſs virtue in what is done; and ſo it is leſs praiſe-worthy and rewardable. The reaſon is eaſy, *viz.* becauſe ſuch a natural propenſity or tendency is an approach to natural neceſſity; and the greater the propenſity, ſtill ſo much the nearer is the approach to neceſſity. And, therefore, as natural neceſſity takes away or ſhuts out *all* virtue, ſo this propenſity approaches to an abolition of virtue; that is, it *diminiſhes* it. And, on the other hand, natural difficulty, in the ſtate of things, is an approach to natural impoſſibility. And as the latter, when it is complete and abſolute, *wholly* takes away Blame; ſo ſuch difficulty takes away *ſome* Blame, or diminiſhes Blame; and makes the thing done to be leſs worthy of puniſhment.

II. Men, in their firſt uſe of ſuch phraſes as theſe, *muſt, can't, can't help it, can't avoid it, neceſſary, unable, impoſſible, unavoidable, irreſiſtable*, &c. uſe them to ſignify a neceſſity of conſtraint or reſtraint, a natural neceſſity or impoſſibility; or ſome neceſſity that the Will has nothing to do in; which may be, whether men will or no; and which may be ſuppoſed to be juſt the ſame, let men's inclinations and deſires be what they will. Such kind of terms in their original uſe, I ſuppoſe, among all nations, are relative; carrying in their ſignification (as was before obſerved) a reference or reſpect to ſome contrary Will, deſire or endeavour, which, it is ſuppoſed, is, or may be, in the caſe. All men find, and begin to find in early childhood, that there are innumerable things that cannot be done, which they deſire to do; and innumerable things which they are averſe to, that muſt be, they cannot avoid them, they will be, whether they chooſe them or no. It is to expreſs this neceſſity, which men ſo ſoon and ſo often find, and which ſo greatly and early affects them in innumerable caſes, that ſuch terms and phraſes are firſt formed; and it is to ſignify ſuch a neceſſity, that they are firſt uſed, and that they are moſt conſtantly uſed, in the common affairs of life; and not to ſignify any ſuch metaphyſical, ſpeculative and abſtract notion, as that connexion in the nature or courſe of things, which is between the ſubject and predicate of a propoſition, and which is the foundation of the certain truth of that propoſition; to ſignify which, they who employ themſelves in philoſophical inquiries into the firſt origin and metaphyſical relations and dependencies of things, have borrowed theſe terms, for want of others. But we grow up from our cradles in a uſe of ſuch terms and phraſes entirely different from this, and carrying a ſenſe exceeding diverſe from that, in which

they are commonly uſed in the controverſy between *Arminians* and *Calviniſts*. And it being, as was ſaid before, a dictate of the univerſal ſenſe of mankind, evident to us as ſoon as we begin to think, that the neceſſity ſignified by theſe terms, in the ſenſe in which we firſt learn them, does excuſe perſons and free them from all Fault or Blame; hence our ideas of excuſableneſs or faultineſs is tied to theſe terms and phraſes by a ſtrong habit, which is begun in childhood, as ſoon as we begin to ſpeak, and grows up with us, and is ſtrengthened by conſtant uſe and cuſtom, the connexion growing ſtronger and ſtronger.

The habitual connexion, which is in men's minds between Blameleſſneſs and thoſe forementioned terms, *muſt*, *cannot*, *unable*, *neceſſary*, *impoſſible*, *unavoidable*, &c. becomes very ſtrong; becauſe, as ſoon as ever men begin to uſe reaſon and ſpeech, they have occaſion to excuſe themſelves, from the natural neceſſity ſignified by theſe terms, in numerous inſtances. —*I can't do it—I could not help it.*—And all mankind have conſtant and daily occaſion to uſe ſuch phraſes in this ſenſe, to excuſe themſelves and others, in almoſt all the concerns of life, with reſpect to diſappointments, and things that happen, which concern and affect ourſelves and others, that are hurtful, or diſagreeable to us or them, or things deſirable, that we or others fail of.

That a being accuſtomed to an union of different ideas, from early childhood, makes the habitual connexion exceeding ſtrong, as though ſuch connexion were owing to *nature*, is manifeſt in innumerable inſtances. It is altogether by ſuch an habitual connexion of ideas, that men judge of the bigneſs or diſtance of the objects of ſight, from their appearance. Thus it is owing to ſuch a connexion early eſtabliſhed, and growing up with a perſon, that he judges a mountain, which he ſees at ten miles diſ-

tance, to be bigger than his noſe, or further off than the end of it. Having been uſed ſo long to join a conſiderable diſtance and magnitude with ſuch an appearance, men imagine it is by a dictate of natural ſenſe: whereas, it would be quite otherwiſe with one that had his eyes newly opened, who had been born blind: he would have the ſame viſible appearance, but natural ſenſe would dictate no ſuch thing, concerning the magnitude or diſtance of what appeared.

III. When men, after they had been ſo habituated to connect ideas of Innocency or Blameleſſneſs with ſuch terms, that the union ſeems to be the effect of mere nature, come to hear the ſame terms uſed, and learn to uſe them themſelves in the forementioned new and metaphyſical ſenſe, to ſignify quite another ſort of neceſſity, which has no ſuch kind of relation to a contrary ſuppoſable Will and endeavour; the notion of plain and manifeſt Blameleſſneſs, by this means, is, by a ſtrong prejudice, inſenſibly and unwarily transferred to a caſe to which it by no means belongs: the change of the uſe of the terms, to a ſignification which is very diverſe, not being taken notice of, or adverted to. And there are ſeveral reaſons, why it is not.

1. The terms, as uſed by philoſophers, are not very diſtinct and clear in their meaning: few uſe them in a fixed determined ſenſe. On the contrary, their meaning is very vague and confuſed. Which is what commonly happens to the words uſed to ſignify things intellectual and moral, and to expreſs what Mr. Locke calls *mixt modes*. If men had a clear and diſtinct underſtanding of what is intended by theſe metaphyſical terms, they would be able more eaſily to compare them with their original and common Senſe; and ſo would not be ſo eaſily led into deluſion by no ſort of terms in the world, as by words of this ſort.

2. The change of the ſignification of the terms is the more inſenſible, becauſe the things ſignified, though indeed very different, yet do in ſome generals agree. In *neceſſity*, that which is *vulgarly* ſo called, there is a ſtrong connexion between the thing ſaid to be neceſſary, and ſomething antecedent to it, in the order of nature; ſo there is alſo in *philoſophical neceſſity*. And though in both kinds of neceſſity, the connexion cannot be called by that name, with relation to an oppoſite Will or endeavour, to which it is *ſuperior*; which is the caſe in vulgar neceſſity; yet in both, the connexion is *prior* to Will and endeavour, and ſo, in ſome reſpect, *ſuperior*. In both kinds of neceſſity, there is a foundation for ſome certainty of the propoſition, that affirms the event. The terms uſed being the ſame, and the things ſignified agreeing in theſe and ſome other general circumſtances, and the expreſſions as uſed by philoſophers being not well defined, and ſo of obſcure and looſe ſignification; hence perſons are not aware of the great difference; had the notions of innocence or faultineſs, which were ſo ſtrongly aſſociated with them, and were ſtrictly united in their minds, ever ſince they can remember, remain united with them ſtill, as if the union were altogether natural and neceſſary; and they that go about to make a ſeparation, ſeem to them to do great violence even to nature itſelf.

IV. Another reaſon why it appears difficult to reconcile it with reaſon, that men ſhould be blamed for that which is neceſſary with a moral neceſſity (which, as was obſerved before, is a ſpecies of philoſophical neceſſity) is, that for want of due conſideration, men inwardly entertain that apprehenſion, that this neceſſity may be againſt men's Wills and ſincere endeavours. They go away with that notion, that men may truly will, and wiſh and ſtrive that it

may be otherwiſe, but that invincible neceſſity ſtands in the way. And many think thus concerning themſelves: ſome, that are wicked men, think they wiſh, that they were good, that they loved God and holineſs; but yet do not find that their wiſhes produce the effect.—The reaſons why men think, are as follow: (1.) They find what may be called an *indirect willingneſs* to have a better Will, in the manner before obſerved. For it is impoſſible, and a contradiction to ſuppoſe the Will to be directly and properly againſt itſelf. And they do not conſider, that this indirect willingneſs is entirely a different thing from properly willing the thing that is the duty and virtue required; and that there is no virtue in that ſort of willingneſs which they have. They do not conſider, that the volitions, which a wicked man may have that he loved God, are no acts of the Will at all againſt the moral evil of not loving God; but only ſome diſagreeable conſequences. But the making the requiſite diſtinction requires more care of reflection and thought, than moſt men are uſed to. And men, through a prejudice in their own favour, are diſpoſed to think well of their own deſires and diſpoſitions, and to account them good and virtuous, though their reſpect to virtue be only *indirect* and *remote*, and it is nothing at all that is virtuous that truly excites or terminates their inclinations. (2.) Another thing, that inſenſibly leads and beguiles men into a ſuppoſition that this moral neceſſity or impoſſibility is, or may be, againſt men's Wills and true endeavours, is the derivation and formation of the terms themſelves, that are often uſed to expreſs it, which is ſuch as ſeems directly to point to, and holds this forth. Such words, for inſtance, as *unable*, *unavoidable*, *impoſſible*, *irreſiſtible*; which carry a plain reference to a ſuppoſable power exerted, endeavours uſed, reſiſtance made, in oppoſition to the

neceſſity : and the perſons that hear them, not conſidering nor ſuſpecting but that they are uſed in their proper ſenſe : that ſenſe being therefore underſtood, there does naturally, and as it were neceſſarily, ariſe in their minds a ſuppoſition, that it may be ſo indeed, that true deſires and endeavours may take place, but that invincible neceſſity ſtands in the way, and renders them vain and to no effect.

V. Another thing, which makes perſons more ready to ſuppoſe it to be contrary to reaſon, that men ſhould be expoſed to the puniſhments threatened to ſin, for doing thoſe things which are morally neceſſary, or not doing thoſe things morally impoſſible, is, that imagination ſtrengthens the argument, and adds greatly to the power and influence of the ſeeming reaſons againſt it, from the greatneſs of that puniſhment. To allow that they may be juſtly expoſed to a ſmall puniſhment, would not be ſo difficult. Whereas, if there were any good reaſon in the caſe, if it were truly a dictate of reaſon, that ſuch neceſſity was inconſiſtent with faultineſs, or juſt puniſhment, the demonſtration would be equally certain with reſpect to a ſmall puniſhment, or any puniſhment at all, as a very great one : but it is not equally eaſy to the imagination. They that argue againſt the juſtice of *damning* men for thoſe things that are thus neceſſary, ſeem to make their argument the ſtronger, by ſetting forth the greatneſs of the puniſhment in ſtrong expreſſions :—*That a man ſhould be caſt into eternal burnings, that he ſhould be made to fry in hell to all eternity for thoſe things which he had no power to avoid, and was under a fatal, unfruſtrable, invincible neceſſity of doing.*

Section IV.

It is agreeable to common Senſe, *and* the natural Notions of Mankind, *to ſuppoſe moral Neceſſity to be conſiſtent with Praiſe and Blame, Reward and Puniſhment.*

Whether the reaſons that have been given, why it appears difficult to ſome perſons, to reconcile with common Senſe the praiſing or blaming, rewarding or puniſhing thoſe things which are morally neceſſary, are thought ſatisfactory or not; yet it moſt evidently appears, by the following things, that if this matter be rightly underſtood, ſetting aſide all deluſion ariſing from the impropriety and ambiguity of terms, this is not at all inconſiſtent with the natural apprehenſions of mankind, and that ſenſe of things which is found every where in the common people; who are furtheſt from having their thoughts perverted from their natural channel, by metaphyſical and philoſophical ſubtilties; but, on the contrary, altogether agreeable *to*, and the very voice and dictate *of*, this natural and vulgar Senſe.

I. This will appear, if we conſider what the vulgar Notion of *blame-worthineſs* is. The idea which the common people, through all ages and nations, have of faultineſs, I ſuppoſe to be plainly this; *a perſon's being or doing wrong, with his own will and pleaſure;* containing theſe two things: 1. *His doing wrong, when he does as he pleaſes.* 2. *His pleaſures being wrong.* Or, in other words, perhaps more intelligibly expreſſing their Notion; *a perſon's having his heart wrong, and doing wrong from his heart.* And this is the ſum total of the matter.

The common people do not aſcend up in their reflections and abſtractions to the metaphyſical

ſources, relations and dependencies of things, in order to form their Notion of faultineſs or blame-worthineſs. They do not wait till they have decided by their refinings, what firſt determines the Will; whether it be determined by ſomething extrinſic, or intrinſic; whether volition determines volition, or whether the underſtanding determines the Will; whether there be any ſuch thing as metaphyſicians mean by contingence (if they have any meaning;) whether there be a ſort of a ſtrange unaccountable ſovereignty in the Will, in the exerciſe of which, by its own ſovereign acts, it brings to paſs all its own ſovereign acts. They do not take any part of their Notion of fault or blame from the reſolution of any ſuch queſtions. If this were the caſe, there are multitudes, yea, the far greater part of mankind, nine hundred and ninety-nine out of a thouſand, would live and die, without having any ſuch Notion, as that of fault, ever entering into their heads, or without ſo much as one having any conception that any body was to be either blamed or commended for any thing. To be ſure, it would be a long time before men came to have ſuch Notions. Whereas it is manifeſt, they are ſome of the firſt Notions that appear in children; who diſcover, as ſoon as they can think, or ſpeak, or act at all as rational creatures, a ſenſe of deſert. And, certainly, in forming their Notion of it, they make no uſe of metaphyſics. All the ground they go upon, conſiſts in theſe two things; *experience*, and a *natural ſenſation* of a certain fitneſs or agreeableneſs, which there is in uniting ſuch moral evil as is above deſcribed, *viz. a being or doing wrong with the Will*, and reſentment in others, and pain inflicted on the perſon in whom this moral evil is. Which *natural Senſe* is what we call by the name of *conſcience*.

It is true, the common people and children, in

their Notion of any faulty act or deed, of any person, do suppose that it is the person's *own act and deed.* But this is all that belongs to what they understand by a thing's being a person's *own deed or action;* even that it is something done by him of choice. That some exercise or motion should begin of itself, does not belong to their Notion of *an action*, or *doing*. If so, it would belong to their Notion of it, that it is something, which is the cause of its own beginning: and that is as much as to say, that it is before it begins to be. Nor is their Notion of *an action* some motion or exercise, that begins accidentally, without any cause or reason; for that is contrary to one of the prime dictates of common Sense, namely, that every thing that begins to be, has some cause or reason why it is.

The common people, in their Notion of a faulty or praise-worthy deed or work done by any one, do suppose, that the man does it in the exercise of *liberty*. But then their Notion of liberty is only a person's having opportunity of doing as he pleases. They have no Notion of liberty consisting in the Will's first acting, and so causing its own acts; and determining, and so causing its own determinations; or choosing, and so causing its own choice. Such a Notion of liberty is what none have, but those that have darkened their own minds with confused metaphysical speculation, and abstruse and ambiguous terms. If a man is not restrained from acting as his Will determines, or constrained to act otherwise: then he has liberty, according to common Notions of liberty, without taking into the idea that grand contradiction of all, the determinations of a man's free Will being the effects of the determinations of his free Will.—Nor have men commonly any Notion of freedom consisting in indifference. For if so, then it would be agreeable to their No-

tion, that the greater indifference men act with, the more freedom they act with; whereas, the reverſe is true. He that in acting, proceeds with the fulleſt inclination, does what he does with the greateſt freedom, according to common Senſe. And ſo far is it from being agreeable to common Senſe, that ſuch liberty as conſiſts in indifference is requiſite to praiſe or blame, that on the contrary, the dictate of every man's natural ſenſe through the world is, that the further he is from being indifferent in his acting good or evil, and the more he does either with full and ſtrong inclination, the more is he eſteemed or abhorred, commended or condemned.

II. If it were inconſiſtent with the common Senſe of mankind, that men ſhould be either to be blamed or commended in any volitions, they have, or fail of, in caſe of moral neceſſity or impoſſibility; then it would ſurely alſo be agreeable to the ſame Senſe and reaſon of Mankind, that the nearer the caſe approaches to ſuch a moral neceſſity or impoſſibility, either through a ſtrong antecedent moral propenſity, on the one hand,* or a great antecedent oppoſition and difficulty on the other, the nearer does it approach to a being neither blameable nor commendable; ſo that acts exerted with ſuch preceding propenſity, would be worthy of proportionably leſs praiſe; and when omitted, the act being attended with ſuch difficulty, the omiſſion would be worthy of the leſs blame. It is ſo, as was obſerved before, with natural neceſſity and impoſſibility, propenſity and difficulty: as it is a plain dictate of the ſenſe of all Mankind, that natural neceſſity and impoſſibility take away *all* blame and praiſe; and therefore, that the nearer the approach is to theſe, through

* It is here argued, on ſuppoſition that not all propenſity implies moral neceſſity, but only ſome very high degree; which none will deny.

previous propenſity or difficulty, ſo praiſe and blame are proportionably *diminiſhed*. And if it were as much a dictate of common Senſe, that moral neceſſity of doing, or impoſſibility of avoiding, takes away *all* praiſe and blame, as that natural neceſſity or impoſſibility does this; then, by a perfect parity of reaſon, it would be as much the dictate of common Senſe, that an *approach* to moral neceſſity of doing, or impoſſibility of avoiding, *diminiſhes* praiſe and blame, as that an approach to natural neceſſity and impoſſibility does ſo. It is equally the voice of common Senſe, that perſons are *excuſable in part*, in neglecting things difficult againſt their Wills, as that they are *excuſable wholly* in neglecting things impoſſible againſt their Wills. And if it made no difference whether the impoſſibility were natural and againſt the Will, or moral, lying in the Will, with regard to excuſableneſs; ſo neither would it make any difference, whether the difficulty, or approach to neceſſity be natural againſt the Will, or moral, lying in the propenſity of the Will.

But it is apparent, that the reverſe of theſe things is true. If there be an approach to a moral neceſſity in a man's exertion of good acts of Will, they being the exerciſe of a ſtrong propenſity to good, and a very powerful love to virtue; it is ſo far from being the dictate of common Senſe, that he is leſs virtuous, and the leſs to be eſteemed, loved and praiſed; that it is agreeable to the natural Notions of all mankind, that he is ſo much the better man, worthy of greater reſpect, and higher commendation. And the ſtronger the inclination is, and the nearer it approaches to neceſſity in that reſpect; or to impoſſibility of neglecting the virtuous act, or of doing a vicious one; ſtill the more virtuous, and worthy of higher commendation. And, on the other hand, if a man exerts evil acts of mind; as, for inſtance,

acts of pride or malice from a rooted and ſtrong habit, or principle of haughtineſs and maliciouſneſs, and a violent propenſity of heart to ſuch acts; according to the natural ſenſe of men, he is ſo far from being the leſs hateful and blameable on that account, that he is ſo much the more worthy to be deteſted and condemned, by all that obſerve him.

Moreover, it is manifeſt that it is no part of the Notion, which mankind commonly have of a blameable or praiſe-worthy act of the Will, that it is an act which is not determined by an antecedent bias or motive, but by the ſovereign power of the Will itſelf; becauſe, if ſo, the greater hand ſuch cauſes have in determining any acts of the Will, ſo much the leſs virtuous or vicious would they be accounted; and the leſs hand, the more virtuous or vicious. Whereas, the reverſe is true: men do not think a good act to be the leſs praiſe-worthy, for the agent's being much determined in it by a good inclination or a good motive, but the more. And if good inclination or motive, has but little influence in determining the agent, they do not think his act ſo much the more virtuous, but the leſs. And ſo concerning evil acts, which are determined by evil motives or inclinations.

Yea, if it be ſuppoſed that good or evil diſpoſitions are implanted in the hearts of men, by nature itſelf, (which, it is certain, is vulgarly ſuppoſed in innumerable caſes) yet it is not commonly ſuppoſed, that men are worthy of no praiſe or diſpraiſe for ſuch diſpoſitions; although what is natural, is undoubtedly neceſſary, nature being prior to all acts of the Will whatſoever. Thus, for inſtance, if a man appears to be of a very haughty or malicious diſpoſition, and is ſuppoſed to be ſo by his natural temper, it is no vulgar Notion, no dictate of the common Senſe and apprehenſion of men, that ſuch

diſpoſitions are no vices or moral evils, or that ſuch perſons are not worthy of diſeſteem, or odium and diſhonour; or that the proud or malicious acts which flow from ſuch natural diſpoſitions, are worthy of no reſentment. Yea, ſuch vile natural diſpoſitions, and the ſtrength of them, will commonly be mentioned rather as an aggravation of the wicked acts, that come from ſuch a fountain, than an extenuation of them. Its being natural for men to act thus, is often obſerved by men in the height of their indignation: they will ſay, "It is his very "nature: he is of a vile natural temper; it is as "natural to him to act ſo, as it is to breathe; he "cannot help ſerving the devil, *&c.*" But it is not thus with regard to hurtful miſchievous things, that any are the ſubjects or occaſions of, by *natural neceſſity*, againſt their inclinations. In ſuch a caſe, the neceſſity, by the common voice of mankind, will be ſpoken of as a full excuſe.—Thus it is very plain, that common Senſe makes a vaſt difference between theſe two kinds of neceſſity, as to the judgment it makes of their influence on the moral quality and deſert of men's actions.

And theſe dictates of men's minds are ſo natural and neceſſary, that it may be very much doubted whether the *Arminians* themſelves have ever got rid of them; yea, their greateſt doctors, that have gone furtheſt in defence of their metaphyſical Notions of liberty, and have brought their arguments to their greateſt ſtrength, and, as they ſuppoſe, to a demonſtration, againſt the conſiſtence of virtue and vice with any neceſſity: it is to be queſtioned, whether there is ſo much as one of them, but that, if he ſuffered very much from the injurious acts of a man, under the power of an invincible haughtineſs and malignancy of temper, would not, from the forementioned natural ſenſe of mind, reſent it far other-

wiſe, than if as great ſufferings came upon him from the wind that blows, and fire that burns by natural neceſſity; and otherwiſe than he would, if he ſuffered as much from the conduct of a man perfectly delirious; yea, though he firſt brought his diſtraction upon him ſome way by his own fault.

Some ſeem to diſdain the diſtinction that we make between *natural* and *moral neceſſity*, as though it were altogether impertinent in this controverſy: "that "which is neceſſary (ſay they) is neceſſary; it is "that which muſt be, and cannot be prevented. And "that which is impoſſible, is impoſſible, and cannot "be done: and, therefore, none can be to blame for "not doing it." And ſuch compariſons are made uſe of, as the commanding of a man to walk, who has loſt his legs, and condemning and puniſhing him for not obeying; inviting and calling upon a man, who is ſhut up in a ſtrong priſon, to come forth, *&c.* But, in theſe things, *Arminians* are very unreaſonable. Let common Senſe determine whether there be not a great difference between thoſe two caſes; the one, that of a man who has offended his Prince, and is caſt into priſon; and after he has lain there a while, the King comes to him, calls him to come forth to him, and tells him, that if he will do ſo, and will fall down before him and humbly beg his pardon, he ſhall be forgiven, and ſet at liberty, and alſo be greatly enriched, and advanced to honour: the priſoner heartily repents of the folly and wickedneſs of his offence againſt his Prince, is thoroughly diſpoſed to abaſe himſelf, and accept of the King's offer; but is confined by ſtrong walls, with gates of braſs, and bars of iron. The other caſe is, that of a man who is of a very unreaſonable ſpirit, of a haughty, ungrateful, wilful diſpoſition; and, moreover, has been brought up in traitorous principles; and has his heart poſſeſſed with an extreme and inveterate

enmity to his lawful ſovereign; and for his rebellion is caſt into priſon, and lies long there, loaden with heavy chains, and in miſerable circumſtances. At length the compaſſionate Prince comes to the priſon, orders his chains to be knocked off, and his priſon-doors to be ſet wide open; calls to him, and tells him, if he would come forth to him, and fall down before him, acknowledge that he has treated him unworthily, and aſk his forgiveneſs; he ſhall be forgiven, ſet at liberty, and ſet in a place of great dignity and profit in his court. But he is ſtout and ſtomachful, and full of haughty malignity, that he cannot be willing to accept the offer: his rooted ſtrong pride and malice have perfect power over him, and as it were bind him, by binding his heart: the oppoſition of his heart has the maſtery over him, having an influence on his mind far ſuperior to the King's grace and condeſcenſion, and to all his offers and promiſes. Now, is it agreeable to common Senſe, to aſſert and ſtand to it, that there is no difference between theſe two caſes, as to any worthineſs of blame in the priſoners; becauſe, forſooth, there is a neceſſity in both, and the required act in each caſe is impoſſible? It is true, a man's evil diſpoſitions may be as ſtrong and immoveable as the bars of a caſtle. But who cannot ſee, that when a man, in the latter caſe, is ſaid to be *unable* to obey the command, the expreſſion is uſed improperly, and not in the ſenſe it has originally and in common ſpeech? And that it may properly be ſaid to be in the rebel's power to come out of priſon, ſeeing he can eaſily do it if he pleaſes; though by reaſon of his vile temper of heart, which is fixed and rooted, it is impoſſible that it ſhould pleaſe him?

Upon the whole, I preſume there is no perſon of good underſtanding, who impartially conſiders the things which have been obſerved, but will allow, that

it is not evident, from the dictates of the common Senſe, or natural Notions of mankind, that moral neceſſity is inconſiſtent with Praiſe and Blame. And, therefore, if the *Arminians* would prove any ſuch inconſiſtency, it muſt be by ſome philoſophical and metaphyſical arguments, and not common Senſe.

There is a grand illuſion in the pretended demonſtration of *Arminians* from common Senſe. The main ſtrength of all theſe demonſtrations lies in that prejudice, that ariſes through the inſenſible change of the uſe and meaning of ſuch terms as *liberty*, *able*, *unable*, *neceſſary*, *impoſſible*, *unavoidable*, *invincible*, *action*, &c. from their original and vulgar Senſe, to a metaphyſical Senſe, entirely diverſe; and the ſtrong connexion of the ideas of Blameleſſneſs, &c. with ſome of theſe terms, by an habit contracted and eſtabliſhed, while theſe terms were uſed in their firſt meaning. This prejudice and deluſion, is the foundation of all thoſe poſitions, they lay down as maxims, by which moſt of the Scriptures, which they alledge in this controverſy, are interpreted, and on which all their pompous demonſtrations from Scripture and reaſon depend. From this ſecret deluſion and prejudice they have almoſt all their advantages: it is the ſtrength of their bulwarks, and the edge of their weapons. And this is the main ground of all the right they have to treat their neighbours in ſo aſſuming a manner, and to inſult others, perhaps as wiſe and good as themſelves, as *weak bigots*, *men that dwell in the dark caves of ſuperſtition*, *perverſely ſet*, *obſtinately ſhutting their eyes againſt the noon-day light*, *enemies to common Senſe*, *maintaining the firſt-born of abſurdities*, &c. &c. But perhaps an impartial conſideration of the things, which have been obſerved in the preceding parts of this enquiry, may enable the lovers of truth better to judge, whoſe doctrine is indeed *abſurd*, *abſtruſe*, *ſelf-contradictory*, and inconſiſt-

ent with common Senſe, and many ways repugnant to the univerſal dictates of the reaſon of mankind.

Corol. From things which have been obſerved, it will follow, that it is agreeable to common Senſe to ſuppoſe, that the glorified ſaints have not their freedom at all diminiſhed, in any reſpect; and that God Himſelf has the higheſt poſſible freedom, according to the true and proper meaning of the term; and that he is, in the higheſt poſſible reſpect, an agent, and active in the exerciſe of his infinite holineſs; though he acts therein, in the higheſt degree, neceſſarily: and his actions of this kind are in the higheſt, moſt abſolutely perfect manner virtuous and praiſe-worthy: and are ſo, for that very reaſon, becauſe they are moſt perfectly neceſſary.

Section V.

Concerning thoſe Objections, *that this Scheme of Neceſſity renders all* Means and Endeavours *for the avoiding of Sin, or the obtaining Virtue and Holineſs*, vain, and to no purpoſe; *and that it makes Men no more than mere* Machines *in Affairs of Morality and Religion.*

Arminians ſay, if it be ſo, that ſin and virtue come to paſs by a neceſſity conſiſting in a ſure connexion of cauſes and effects, antecedents and conſequents, it can never be worth the while to uſe any Means or Endeavours to obtain the one, and avoid the other; ſeeing no Endeavours can alter the futurity of the event, which is become neceſſary by a connexion already eſtabliſhed.

But I deſire, that this matter may be fully conſidered; and that it may be examined with a thorough

ſtrictneſs, whether it will follow that Endeavours and Means, in order to avoid or obtain any future thing, muſt be more in vain, on the ſuppoſition of ſuch a connexion of antecedents and conſequents, than if the contrary be ſuppoſed.

For Endeavours to be in vain, is for them not to be ſucceſsful; that is to ſay, for them not eventually to be the Means of the thing aimed at, which cannot be, but in one of theſe two ways; either, *firſt*, That although the Means are uſed, yet the event aimed at does not follow: or, *ſecondly*, If the event does follow, it is not becauſe of the Means, or from any connexion or dependence of the event on the Means, the event would have come to paſs, as well without the Means as with them. If either of theſe two things are the caſe, then the Means are not properly ſucceſsful, and are truly in vain. The ſucceſsfulneſs or unſucceſsfulneſs of Means, in order to an effect, or their being in vain or not in vain, conſiſts in thoſe Means being connected, or not connected, with the effect, in ſuch a manner as this, *viz.* That the effect is *with* the Means, and not *without* them; or, that the being of the effect is, on the one hand, connected with Means, and the want of the effect, on the other hand, is connected with the want of the Means. If there be ſuch a connexion as this between Means and end, the Means are not in vain: the more there is of ſuch a connexion, the further they are from being in vain; and the leſs of ſuch a connexion, the more they are in vain.

Now, therefore, the queſtion to be anſwered, (in order to determine, whether it follows from this doctrine of the neceſſary connexion between foregoing things, and conſequent ones, that Means uſed in order to any effect, are more in vain than they would be otherwiſe) is, whether it follows from it, that there is leſs of the forementioned connexion between Means

and effect; that is, whether, on the ſuppoſition of there being a real and true connexion between antecedent things and conſequent ones, there muſt be leſs of a connexion between Means and effect, than on the ſuppoſition of there being no fixed connexion between antecedent things and conſequent ones: and the very ſtating of this queſtion is ſufficient to anſwer it. It muſt appear to every one that will open his eyes, that this queſtion cannot be affirmed, without the groſſeſt abſurdity and inconſiſtence.—Means are foregoing things, and effects are following things: And if there were no connexion between foregoing things and following ones, there could be no connexion between Means and end; and ſo all Means would be wholly vain and fruitleſs. For it is by virtue of ſome connexion only, that they become ſucceſsful: It is ſome connexion obſerved, or revealed, or otherwiſe known, between antecedent things and following ones, that is what directs in the choice of Means. And if there were no ſuch thing as an eſtabliſhed connexion, there could be no choice, as to Means; one thing would have no more tendency to an effect, than another; there would be no ſuch thing as tendency in the caſe. All thoſe things, which are ſucceſsful Means of other things, do therein prove connected antecedents of them: and therefore to aſſert, that a fixed connexion between antecedents and conſequents makes Means vain and uſeleſs, or ſtands in the way to hinder the connexion between Means and end, is juſt ſo ridiculous, as to ſay, that a connexion between antecedents and conſequents ſtands in the way to hinder a connexion between antecedents and conſequents.

Nor can any ſuppoſed connexion of the ſucceſſion or train of antecedents and conſequents, from the very beginning of all things, the connexion being made already ſure and neceſſary, either by eſtabliſh-

ed laws of nature, or by theſe together with a degree of ſovereign immediate interpoſitions of divine power, on ſuch and ſuch occaſions, or any other way (if any other there be;) I ſay, no ſuch neceſſary connexion of a ſeries of antecedents and conſequents can in the leaſt tend to hinder, but that the Means we uſe may belong to the ſeries; and ſo may be ſome of thoſe antecedents which are connected with the conſequents we aim at, in the eſtabliſhed courſe of things. Endeavours which we uſe, are things that exiſt; and, therefore, they belong to the general chain of events; all the parts of which chain are ſuppoſed to be connected: and ſo Endeavours are ſuppoſed to be connected with ſome effects, or ſome conſequent things or other. And certainly this does not hinder but that the events they are connected with, may be thoſe which we aim at, and which we chooſe, becauſe we judge them moſt likely to have a connexion with thoſe events, from the eſtabliſhed order and courſe of things which we obſerve, or from ſomething in divine Revelation.

Let us ſuppoſe a real and ſure connexion between a man's having his eyes open in the clear day-light, with good organs of ſight, and ſeeing; ſo that ſeeing is connected with his opening his eyes, and not ſeeing with his not opening his eyes; and alſo the like connexion between ſuch a man's attempting to open his eyes, and his actually doing it: the ſuppoſed eſtabliſhed connexion between theſe antecedents and conſequents, let the connexion be never ſo ſure and neceſſary, certainly does not prove that it is in vain, for a man in ſuch circumſtances, to attempt to open his eyes, in order to ſeeing: his aiming at that event, and the uſe of the Means, being the effect of his Will, does not break the connexion, or hinder the ſucceſs.

So that the objection we are upon does not lie againſt the doctrine of the neceſſity of events by a

certainty of connexion and conſequence: On the contrary, it is truly forcible againſt the *Arminian* doctrine of contingence and ſelf-determination; which is inconſiſtent with ſuch a connexion. If there be no connexion between thoſe events, wherein virtue and vice conſiſt, and any thing antecedent; then there is no connexion between theſe events and any Means or Endeavours uſed in order to them: and if ſo, then thoſe Means muſt be in vain. The leſs there is of connexion between foregoing things and following ones, ſo much the leſs there is between Means and end, Endeavours and ſucceſs; and in the ſame proportion are Means and Endeavours ineffectual and in vain.

It will follow from *Arminian* principles, that there is no degree of connexion between virtue or vice, and any foregoing event or thing: or, in other words, that the determination of the exiſtence of virtue or vice do not in the leaſt depend on the influence of any thing that comes to paſs antecedently, from which the determination of its exiſtence is, as its cauſe, Means, or ground; becauſe, ſo far as it is ſo, it is not from ſelf-determination: and, therefore, ſo far there is nothing of the nature of virtue or vice. And ſo it follows, that virtue and vice are not at all, in any degree, dependent upon, or connected with, any foregoing event or exiſtence, as its cauſe, ground, or Means. And if ſo, then all foregoing Means muſt be totally in vain.

Hence it follows, that there cannot, in any conſiſtence with the *Arminian* ſcheme, be any reaſonable ground of ſo much as a conjecture concerning the conſequence of any Means and Endeavours, in order to eſcaping vice or obtaining virtue, or any choice or preference of Means, as having a greater probability of ſucceſs by ſome than others; either from any natural connexion or dependence of the end on

the Means, or through any divine conſtitution, or revealed way of God's beſtowing or bringing to paſs theſe things, in conſequence of any Means, Endeavours, prayers or deeds. Conjectures, in this latter caſe, depend on a ſuppoſition, that God himſelf is the giver, or determining cauſe of the events ſought: but if they depend on ſelf-determination, then God is not the determining or diſpoſing author of them: and if theſe things are not of his diſpoſal, then no conjecture can be made, from any revelation he has given, concerning any way or method of his diſpoſal of them.

Yea, on theſe principles, it will not only follow, that men cannot have any reaſonable ground of judgment or conjecture, that their Means and Endeavours to obtain virtue or avoid vice, will be ſucceſsful, but they may be ſure, they will not; they may be certain, that they will be in vain; and that if ever the thing, which they ſeek, comes to paſs, it will not be at all owing to the Means they uſe. For Means and Endeavours can have no effect at all, in order to obtain the end, but in one of theſe two ways: either, (1.) Through a natural tendency and influence, to prepare and diſpoſe the mind more to virtuous acts, either by cauſing the diſpoſition of the heart to be more in favour of ſuch acts, or by bringing the mind more into the view of powerful motives and inducements: or, (2.) By putting perſons more in the way of God's beſtowment of the benefit. But neither of theſe can be the caſe. *Not the latter;* for, as has been juſt now obſerved, it does not conſiſt with the *Arminian* notion of ſelf-determination, which they ſuppoſe eſſential to virtue, that God ſhould be the beſtower, or (which is the ſame thing) the determining, diſpoſing author of virtue. *Not the former,* for natural influence and tendency ſuppoſes cauſality and connexion; and ſuppoſes neceſſity of

event, which is inconſiſtent with *Arminian* liberty. A tendency of Means, by biaſing the heart in favour of virtue, or by bringing the Will under the influence and power of motives in its determinations, are both inconſiſtent with *Arminian* liberty of Will, conſiſting in indifference, and ſovereign ſelf-determination, as has been largely demonſtrated.

But for the more full removal of this prejudice againſt the doctrine of neceſſity, which has been maintained, as though it tended to encourage a total neglect of all Endeavours as vain; the following things may be conſidered.

The queſtion is not, whether men may not thus improve this doctrine: we know that many true and wholeſome doctrines are abuſed: but, whether the doctrine gives any juſt occaſion for ſuch an improvement; or whether, on the ſuppoſition of the truth of the doctrine, ſuch a uſe of it would not be unreaſonable? If any ſhall affirm, that it would not, but that the very nature of the doctrine is ſuch as gives juſt occaſion for it, it muſt be on this ſuppoſition, namely, that ſuch an invariable neceſſity of all things already ſettled, muſt render the interpoſition of all Means, Endeavours, concluſions or actions of ours, in order to the obtaining any future end whatſoever, perfectly inſignificant; becauſe they cannot in the leaſt alter or vary the courſe and ſeries of things, in any event or circumſtance; all being already fixed unalterably by neceſſity: and that therefore it is folly, for men to uſe any Means *for any end;* but their wiſdom, to ſave themſelves the trouble of Endeavours, and take their eaſe. No perſon can draw ſuch an inference from this doctrine, and come to ſuch a concluſion, without contradicting himſelf, and going counter to the very principles he pretends to act upon: for he comes to a concluſion, and takes a courſe, *in order to an end*, even *his eaſe*, or the ſaving himſelf from trou-

ble ; he ſeeks ſomething future, and uſes Means in order to a future thing, even in his drawing up that concluſion, that he will ſeek nothing, and uſe no Means in order to any thing in future ; he ſeeks his future eaſe, and the benefit and comfort of indolence. If prior neceſſity, that determines all things, makes vain all actions or concluſions of ours, in order to any thing future ; then it makes vain all concluſions and conduct of ours, in order to our future eaſe. The meaſure of our eaſe, with the time, manner, and every circumſtance of it, is already fixed, by all-determining neceſſity, as much as any thing elſe. If he ſays within himſelf, "What future happineſs or "miſery I ſhall have, is already, in effect, determin-"ed by the neceſſary courſe and connexion of things; "therefore, I will ſave myſelf the trouble of labour "and diligence, which cannot add to my determin-"ed degree of happineſs, or diminiſh my miſery ; "but will take my eaſe, and will enjoy the comfort "of ſloth and negligence." Such a man contradicts himſelf: he ſays, the meaſure of his future happineſs and miſery is already fixed, and he will not try to diminiſh the one, nor add to the other: but yet, in his very concluſion, he contradicts this ; for, he takes up this concluſion, *to add to his future happineſs*, by the eaſe and comfort of his negligence ; and to diminiſh his future trouble and miſery, by ſaving himſelf the trouble of uſing Means and taking pains.

Therefore perſons cannot reaſonably make this improvement of the doctrine of neceſſity, that they will go into a voluntary negligence of Means for their own happineſs. For the principles they muſt go upon in order to this, are inconſiſtent with their making any improvement at all of the doctrine: for to make ſome improvement of it, is to be influenced by it, to come to ſome voluntary concluſion, in regard to their own conduct, with ſome view or aim:

but this, as has been ſhown, is inconſiſtent with the principles they pretend to act upon. In ſhort, the principles are ſuch as cannot be acted upon at all, or, in any reſpect, conſiſtently. And, therefore, in every pretence of acting upon them, or making any improvement at all of them, there is a ſelf-contradiction.

As to that objection againſt the doctrine, which I have endeavoured to prove, that it makes men no more than mere Machines; I would ſay, that notwithſtanding this doctrine, Man is entirely, perfectly and unſpeakably different from a mere Machine, in that he has reaſon and underſtanding, and has a faculty of Will, and is ſo capable of volition and choice; and in that, his Will is guided by the dictates or views of his underſtanding; and in that his external actions and behaviour, and, in many reſpects, alſo his thoughts, and the exerciſes of his mind, are ſubject to his Will; ſo that he has liberty to act according to his choice, and do what he pleaſes; and by Means of theſe things, is capable of moral habits and moral acts, ſuch inclinations and actions as, according to the common ſenſe of mankind, are worthy of praiſe, eſteem, love and reward; or, on the contrary, of diſeſteem, deteſtation, indignation and puniſhment.

In theſe things is all the difference from mere Machines, as to liberty and agency, that would be any perfection, dignity or privilege, in any reſpect: all the difference that can be deſired, and all that can be conceived of; and indeed all that the pretenſions of the *Arminians* themſelves come to, as they are forced often to explain themſelves. (Though their explications overthrow and aboliſh the things aſſerted, and pretended to be explained,) for they are forced to explain a ſelf-determining power of Will, by a power in the ſoul, to determine as it chooſes or

Wills; which comes to no more than this, that a man has a power of chooſing, and, in many inſtances, can do as he chooſes. Which is quite a different thing from that contradiction, his having power of chooſing his firſt act of choice in the caſe.

Or, if their ſcheme makes any other difference than this, between Men and Machines, it is for the worſe: it is ſo far from ſuppoſing Men to have a dignity and privilege above Machines, that it makes the manner of their being determined ſtill more unhappy. Whereas, Machines, are guided by an underſtanding cauſe, by the ſkilful hand of the workman or owner; the Will of Man is left to the guidance of nothing, but abſolute blind contingence.

Section VI.

Concerning that Objection *againſt the Doctrine which has been maintained, that it agrees with the* Stoical *Doctrine of* Fate, *and the Opinions of Mr. Hobbes.*

When *Calviniſts* oppoſe the *Arminian* notion of the freedom of Will, and contingence of volition, and inſiſt that there are no acts of the Will, nor any other events whatſoever, but what are attended with ſome kind of neceſſity; their oppoſers cry out of them, as agreeing with the ancient *Stoics* in their doctrine of *Fate*, and with Mr. Hobbes in his opinion of neceſſity.

It would not be worth while to take notice of ſo impertinent an objection, had it not been urged by ſome of the chief *Arminian* writers. There were many important truths maintained by the ancient *Greek* and *Roman* philoſophers, and eſpecially the *Stoics*, that are never the worſe for being held by

them. The *Stoic* philoſophers, by the general agreement of Chriſtian divines, and even *Arminian* divines, were the greateſt, wiſeſt, and moſt virtuous of all the heathen philoſophers; and, in their doctrine and practice, came the neareſt to Chriſtianity of any of their ſects. How frequently are the ſayings of theſe philoſophers, in many of the writings and ſermons, even of *Arminian* divines, produced, not as arguments of the falſeneſs of the doctrines which they delivered, but as a confirmation of ſome of the greateſt truths of the Chriſtian religion, relating to the unity and perfections of the Godhead, a future ſtate, the duty and happineſs of mankind, &c. as obſerving how the light of nature and reaſon, in the wiſeſt and beſt of the Heathens, harmonized with, and confirms the Goſpel of Jeſus Chriſt.

And it is very remarkable, concerning Dr. Whitby, that although he alledges the agreement of the *Stoics* with us, wherein he ſuppoſes they maintained the like doctrine with us, as an argument againſt the truth of our doctrine; yet, this very Dr. Whitby alledges the agreement of the *Stoics* with the *Arminians*, wherein he ſuppoſes they taught the ſame doctrine with them, as an argument for the truth of their doctrine.* So that, when the *Stoics* agree with them, this (it ſeems) is a confirmation of their doctrine, and a confutation of ours, as ſhewing that our opinions are contrary to the natural ſenſe and common reaſon of mankind: nevertheleſs, when the *Stoics* agree with *us*, it argues no ſuch thing in our favour; but, on the contrary, is a great argument againſt us, and ſhews our doctrine to be heatheniſh.

It is obſerved by ſome *Calviniſtic* writers, that the *Arminians* ſymbolize with the *Stoics*, in ſome of thoſe doctrines wherein they are oppoſed by the *Calvin-*

* *Whitby* on the five points, Edit. 3. p. 325, 326, 327.

iſts; particularly in their denying an original, innate, total corruption and depravity of heart; and in what they held of man's ability to make himſelf truly virtuous and conformed to God;—and in ſome other doctrines.

It may be further obſerved, it is certainly no better objection againſt our doctrine, that it agrees, in ſome reſpects, with the doctrine of the ancient *Stoic* philoſophers, than it is againſt theirs, wherein they differ from us, that it agrees, in ſome reſpects, with the opinion of the very worſt of the heathen philoſophers, the followers of Epicurus, that father of atheiſm and licentiouſneſs, and with the doctrine of the Sadducees and Jeſuits.

I am not much concerned to know preciſely, what the ancient *Stoic* philoſophers held concerning *Fate*, in order to determine what is truth; as though it were a ſure way to be in the right, to take good heed to differ from them. It ſeems, that they differed among themſelves; and probably the doctrine of *Fate* as maintained by moſt of them, was, in ſome reſpects, erroneous. But whatever their doctrine was, if any of them held ſuch a Fate, as is repugnant to any liberty, conſiſting in our doing as we pleaſe, I utterly deny ſuch a Fate. If they held any ſuch Fate, as is not conſiſtent with the common and univerſal notions that mankind have of liberty, activity, moral agency, virtue and vice; I diſclaim any ſuch thing, and think I have demonſtrated that the ſcheme I maintain is no ſuch ſcheme. If the *Stoics*, by *Fate*, meant any thing of ſuch a nature, as can be ſuppoſed to ſtand in the way of the advantage and benefit of the uſe of Means and Endeavours, or make it leſs worth the while for men to deſire, and ſeek after any thing wherein their virtue and happineſs conſiſts; I hold no doctrine that is clogged with any ſuch inconvenience, any more than any other ſcheme what-

ſoever; and by no means ſo much as the *Arminian* ſcheme of contingence; as has been ſhewn. If they held any ſuch doctrine of univerſal fatality, as is inconſiſtent with any kind of liberty, that is or can be any perfection, dignity, privilege or benefit, or any thing deſirable, in any reſpect, for any intelligent creature, or indeed with any liberty that is poſſible or conceivable; I embrace no ſuch doctrine. If they held any ſuch doctrine of Fate, as is inconſiſtent with the world's being in all things ſubject to the diſpoſal of an intelligent wiſe agent, that preſides, not as the *ſoul* of the world, but as the Sovereign *Lord* of the Univerſe, governing all things by proper will, choice and deſign, in the exerciſe of the moſt perfect liberty conceivable, without ſubjection to any conſtraint, or being properly under the power or influence of any thing before, above or without himſelf; I wholly renounce any ſuch doctrine.

As to Mr. Hobbes' maintaining the ſame doctrine concerning neceſſity; I confeſs, it happens I never read Mr. Hobbes. Let his opinion be what it will, we need not reject all truth which is demonſtrated by clear evidence, merely becauſe it was once held by ſome bad man. This great truth, *that Jeſus is the Son of God*, was not ſpoiled becauſe it was once and again proclaimed with a loud voice by the devil. If truth is ſo defiled, becauſe it is ſpoken by the mouth, or written by the pen of ſome ill-minded miſchievous man, that it muſt never be received, we ſhall never know, when we hold any of the moſt precious and evident truths by a ſure tenure. And if Mr. Hobbes has made a bad uſe of this truth, that is to be lamented; but the truth is not to be thought worthy of rejection on that account. It is common for the corruptions of the hearts of evil men to abuſe the beſt things to vile purpoſes.

I might alſo take notice of its having been obſerv-

ed, that the *Arminians* agree with Mr. Hobbes in many more things than the *Calviniſts*.* As, in what he is ſaid to hold concerning original ſin, in denying the neceſſity of ſupernatural illumination, in denying infuſed grace, in denying the doctrine of juſtification by faith alone; and other things.

Section VII.

Concerning the Neceſſity *of the* Divine Will.

Some may poſſibly object againſt what has been ſuppoſed of the abſurdity and inconſiſtence of a ſelf-determining power in the Will, and the impoſſibility of its being otherwiſe, than that the Will ſhould be determined in every caſe by ſome motive, and by a motive which (as it ſtands in the view of the underſtanding) is of ſuperior ſtrength to any appearing on the other ſide; that if theſe things are true, it will follow, that not only the Will of created minds, but the Will of *God Himſelf* is neceſſary in all its determinations. Concerning which, ſays the Author of the *Eſſay on the Freedom of the Will in God and in the Creature* (pag. 85, 86,) "What ſtrange doc-"trine is this, contrary to all our ideas of the do-"minion of God? Does it not deſtroy the glory of "his liberty of choice, and take away from the Cre-"ator and Governor and Benefactor of the world, "that moſt free and Sovereign Agent, all the glory "of this ſort of freedom? Does it not ſeem to make "him a kind of mechanical medium of fate, and in-"troduce Mr. Hobbes' doctrine of fatality and Ne-"ceſſity, into all things that God hath to do with?

* Dr. Gill, in his Anſwer to Dr. Whitby. Vol. III. p. 183, &c.

"Does it not ſeem to repreſent the bleſſed God, as "a Being of vaſt underſtanding, as well as power "and efficiency, but ſtill to leave him without a "Will to chooſe among all the objects within his "view? In ſhort, it ſeems to make the bleſſed God "a ſort of Almighty Miniſter of Fate, under its uni-"verſal and ſupreme influence; as it was the pro-"feſſed ſentiment of ſome of the ancients, that Fate "was above the gods."

This is declaiming, rather than arguing; and an application to men's imaginations and prejudices, rather than to mere reaſon.—But I would calmly endeavour to conſider, whether there be any reaſon in this frightful repreſentation.—But before I enter upon a particular conſideration of the matter, I would obſerve this: that it is reaſonable to ſuppoſe, it ſhould be much more difficult to expreſs or conceive things according to exact metaphyſical truth, relating to the nature and manner of the exiſtence of things in the Divine Underſtanding and Will, and the operation of theſe faculties (if I may ſo call them) of the Divine Mind, than in the human mind; which is infinitely more within our view, and nearer to a proportion to the meaſure of our comprehenſion, & more commenſurate to the uſe and import of human ſpeech. Language is indeed very deficient, in regard of terms, to expreſs preciſe truth concerning our own minds, and their faculties and operations. (Words were firſt formed to expreſs external things; and thoſe that are applied to expreſs things internal and ſpiritual, are almoſt all borrowed, and uſed in a ſort of figurative ſenſe.) Whence they are, moſt of them, attended with a great deal of ambiguity and unfixedneſs in their ſignification, occaſioning innumerable doubts, difficulties and confuſions, in inquiries and controverſies, about things of this nature. But language is much leſs

adapted to expreſs things in the mind of the incomprehenſible Deity, preciſely as they are.

We find a great deal of difficulty in conceiving exactly of the nature of our own ſouls. And notwithſtanding all the progreſs which has been made, in paſt and preſent ages, in this kind of knowledge, whereby our metaphyſics, as it relates to theſe things, is brought to greater perfection than once it was; yet, here is ſtill work enough left for future inquiries and reſearches, and room for progreſs ſtill to be made, for many ages and generations. But we had need to be infinitely able metaphyſicians, to conceive with clearneſs, according to ſtrict, proper and perfect truth, concerning the nature of the Divine Eſſence, and the modes of the action and operation of the powers of the Divine Mind.

And it may be noted particularly, that though we are obliged to conceive of ſome things in God as conſequent and dependent on others, and of ſome things pertaining to the Divine Nature and Will as the foundation of others, and ſo before others in the order of nature: as, we muſt conceive of the knowledge and holineſs of God as prior, in the order of nature, to his happineſs; the perfection of his underſtanding, as the foundation of his wiſe purpoſes and decrees; the holineſs of his nature, as the cauſe and reaſon of his holy determinations. And yet, when we ſpeak of cauſe and effect, antecedent and conſequent, fundamental and dependent, determining and determined, in the firſt Being, who is ſelf-exiſtent, independent, of perfect and abſolute ſimplicity and immutability, and the firſt cauſe of all things; doubtleſs there muſt be leſs propriety in ſuch repreſentations, that when we ſpeak of derived dependent beings, who are compounded, and liable to perpetual mutation and ſucceſſion.

Having premiſed this, I proceed to obſerve con

cerning the forementioned Author's exclamation, about the *neceſſary Determination of God's Will*, in all things, by what he ſees to be *fitteſt* and *beſt*.

That all the ſeeming force of ſuch objections and exclamations muſt ariſe from an imagination, that there is ſome ſort of privilege or dignity in being without ſuch a moral Neceſſity, as will make it impoſſible to do any other, than always chooſe what is wiſeſt and beſt; as though there were ſome diſadvantage, meanneſs and ſubjection, in ſuch a Neceſſity; a thing by which the Will was confined, kept under, and held in ſervitude by ſomething, which, as it were, maintained a ſtrong and invincible power and dominion over it, by bonds that held him faſt, and that he could, by no means, deliver himſelf from. Whereas, this muſt be all mere imagination and deluſion. It is no diſadvantage or diſhonour to a being, neceſſarily to act in the moſt excellent and happy manner, from the neceſſary perfection of his own nature. This argues no imperfection, inferiority or dependence, nor any want of dignity, privilege or aſcendency.* It is not in-

* "It might have been objected, with more plauſibleneſs, "that the Supreme Cauſe cannot be free, becauſe he muſt "needs do always what is beſt in the whole. But this would "not at all ſerve Spinoza's purpoſe; for this is a Neceſſity, "not of nature and of fate, but of fitneſs and wiſdom; a Ne- "ceſſity conſiſtent with the greateſt freedom, and moſt per- "fect choice. For the only foundation of this Neceſſity is "ſuch an unalterable rectitude of Will, and perfection of "wiſdom, as makes it impoſſible for a wiſe Being to act fool- "iſhly." Clark's Demonſtration of the Being and Attributes of God. Edit. 6, p. 64.

"Though God is a moſt perfect free Agent, yet he cannot "but do always what is beſt and wiſeſt in the whole. The "reaſon is evident; becauſe perfect wiſdom and goodneſs "are as ſteady and certain principles of action, as Neceſſity "itſelf; and an infinitely wiſe and good Being, indued with "the moſt perfect liberty, can no more chooſe to act in con-

conſiſtent with the abſolute and moſt perfect ſovereignty of God. The ſovereignty of God is his ability and authority to do whatever pleaſes him; whereby *He doth according to his Will in the armies of Heaven, and amongſt the inhabitants of the earth, and none can ſtay his hand, or ſay unto him, what doſt thou?* —The following things belong to the *ſovereignty* of God; *viz.* (1.) Supreme, Univerſal, and Infinite *Power;* whereby he is able to do what he pleaſes, without control, without any confinement of that power, without any ſubjection, in the leaſt meaſure, to any other power; and ſo without any hinderance or reſtraint, that it ſhould be either impoſſible, or at all difficult, for him to accompliſh his Will; and without any dependence of his power on any other power, from whence it ſhould be derived, or which it ſhould ſtand in any need of: ſo far from this, that all other power is derived from him, and is abſolutely dependent on him. (2.) That He has ſu-

" tradiction to wiſdom and goodneſs, than a neceſſary agent " can act contrary to the Neceſſity by which it is acted; it " being as great an abſurdity and impoſſibility in choice, for " Infinite Wiſdom to chooſe to act unwiſely, or Infinite Good- " neſs to chooſe what is not good, as it would be in nature, " for abſolute Neceſſity to fail of producing its neceſſary " effect. There was, indeed, no Neceſſity in nature, that God " ſhould at firſt create ſuch beings as he has created, or indeed " any being at all; becauſe he is, in Himſelf, infinitely happy " and all-ſufficient. There was alſo, no Neceſſity in nature, " that he ſhould preſerve and continue things in being, after " they were created; becauſe he would be ſelf-ſufficient with- " out their continuance, as he was before their creation. But " it was fit and wiſe and good, that Infinite Wiſdom ſhould " manifeſt, and Infinite Goodneſs communicate itſelf; and " therefore it was neceſſary, in the ſenſe of Neceſſity I am " now ſpeaking of, that things ſhould be made *at ſuch a time*, " and continued *ſo long*, and indeed with various perfections " in ſuch degrees, as Infinite Wiſdom and Goodneſs ſaw it " wiſeſt and beſt that they ſhould." *Ibid.* p. 112, 113.

preme *authority;* abſolute and moſt perfect right to do what he Wills, without ſubjection to any ſuperior authority, or any derivation of authority from any other, or limitation by any diſtinct independent authority, either ſuperior, equal, or inferior; he being the head of all dominion, and fountain of all authority; and alſo without reſtraint by any obligation, implying either ſubjection, derivation, or dependence, or proper limitation. (3.) That his *Will* is ſupreme, underived, and independent on any thing without Himſelf; being in every thing determined by his own counſel, having no other rule but his own wiſdom; his Will not being ſubject to, or reſtrained by the Will of any other, and other Wills being perfectly ſubject to his. (4.) That his *Wiſdom*, which determines his Will, is ſupreme, perfect, underived, ſelf-ſufficient and independent; ſo that it may be ſaid, as in Iſa. xl. 14, *With whom took He counſel? And who inſtructed Him*

" 'Tis not a fault, but a perfection of our nature, to deſire, " will and act, according to the laſt reſult of a fair examina- " tion.—This is ſo far from being a reſtraint or diminution " of freedom, that it is the very improvement and benefit of " it: 'tis not an abridgment, 'tis the end and uſe of our lib- " erty; and the further we are removed from ſuch a determi- " nation, the nearer we are to miſery and ſlavery. A perfect " indifference in the mind, not determinable by its laſt judg- " ment, of the good or evil that is thought to attend its choice, " would be ſo far from being an advantage and excellency of " any intellectual nature, that it would be as great an imper- " fection, as the want of indifferency to act, or not to act, till " determined by the Will, would be an imperfection on the " other ſide.—'Tis as much a perfection, that deſire or the " power of preferring ſhould be determined by good, as that " the power of acting ſhould be determined by the Will: and " the certainer ſuch determination is, the greater the perfec- " tion. Nay, were we determined by any thing but the laſt " reſult of our own minds, judging of the good or evil of any " action, we were not free. This very end of our freedom " being, that we might attain the good we chooſe; and, there-

and taught Him in the path of judgment, and taught Him knowledge, and ſhewed him the way of underſtanding ? —There is no other Divine Sovereignty but this : and this is properly *abſolute ſovereignty :* no other is deſirable ; nor would any other be honorable, or happy : and indeed, there is no other conceivable or poſſible. It is the glory and greatneſs of the Divine Sovereign, that God's Will is determined by his own infinite all-ſufficient wiſdom in every thing ; and in nothing at all is either directed by any inferior wiſdom, or by no wiſdom ; whereby it would become ſenſeleſs arbitrarineſs, determining and acting without reaſon, deſign or end.

If God's Will is ſteadily and ſurely determined in every thing by *ſupreme* wiſdom, then it is in every thing neceſſarily determined to that which is *moſt* wiſe. And, certainly, it would be a diſadvantage and indignity, to be otherwiſe. For if the Divine

" fore, every man is brought under a Neceſſity by his conſti-
" tution, as an intelligent being, to be determined in willing
" by his own thought and judgment, what is beſt for him to
" do ; elſe he would be under the determination of ſome other
" than himſelf, which is want of liberty. And to deny that a
" man's Will, in every determination, follows his own judg-
" ment, is to ſay, that a man wills and acts for an end that he
" would not have, at the ſame time that he wills and acts for
" it. For if he prefers it in his preſent thoughts, before any
" other, it is plain he then thinks better of it, and would have
" it before any other ; unleſs he can have, and not have it ;
" will, and not will it, at the ſame time ; a contradiction too
" manifeſt to be admitted.—If we look upon thoſe ſuperior
" beings above us, who enjoy perfect happineſs, we ſhall have
" reaſon to judge, that they are more ſteadily determined in
" their choice of good than we ; and yet we have no reaſon
" to think they are leſs happy, or leſs free, than we are. And
" if it were fit for ſuch poor finite creatures as we are, to pro-
" nounce what Infinite Wiſdom and Goodneſs could do, I
" think we might ſay, that God himſelf cannot chooſe what
" is not good. *The freedom of the Almighty hinders not his*
" *being determined by what is beſt.*—But to give a right view

Will was not neceſſarily determined to that, which in every caſe is wiſeſt and beſt, it muſt be ſubject to ſome degree of undeſigning contingence; and ſo in the ſame degree liable to evil. To ſuppoſe the Divine Will liable to be carried hither and thither at random, by the uncertain wind of blind contingence, which is guided by no wiſdom, no motive, no intelligent dictate whatſoever, (if any ſuch thing were poſſible) would certainly argue a great degree of imperfection and meanneſs, infinitely unworthy of the Deity.—If it be a diſadvantage for the Divine Will to be attended with this moral Neceſſity, then the more free from it, and the more left at random, the

" of this miſtaken part of liberty, let me aſk, Would any one " be a changeling, becauſe he is leſs determined by wiſe de- " termination, than a wiſe man? Is it worth the name of free- " dom, to be at liberty to play the fool, and draw ſhame and " miſery upon a man's ſelf? If to break looſe from the con- " duct of reaſon, and to want that reſtraint of examination and " judgment, that keeps us from doing or chooſing the worſe, " be liberty, true liberty, mad-men and fools are the only free " men. Yet, I think, no body would chooſe to be mad, for " the ſake of ſuch liberty, but he that is mad already." *Locke*, Hum. Und. Vol. I. Edit. 7. p. 215, 216.

" This Being, having all things always neceſſarily in view, " muſt always, and eternally will, according to his infinite " comprehenſion of things; that is, muſt will all things that " are wiſeſt and beſt to be done. There is no getting free of " this conſequence. If it can will at all, it muſt will this way. " To be capable of knowing, and not capable of willing, is " not to be underſtood. And to be capable of willing other- " wiſe than what is wiſeſt and beſt, contradicts that knowledge " which is infinite. Infinite knowledge muſt direct the Will " without error. *Here then, is the origin of moral Neceſſity; " and that is really, of freedom.*—Perhaps it may be ſaid, " when the Divine Will is determined, from the conſideration " of the eternal aptitudes of things, it is as neceſſarily deter- " mined, as if it were phyſically impelled, if that were poſſi- " ble. But it is unſkilfulneſs, to ſuppoſe this an objection. " The great principle is once eſtabliſhed, *viz.* That the Di- " vine Will is determined by the eternal reaſon and aptitudes

greater dignity and advantage. And, conſequently to be perfectly free from the direction of underſtanding, and univerſally and entirely left to ſenſeleſs unmeaning contingence, to act abſolutely at random, would be the ſupreme glory.

It no more argues any dependence of God's Will, that his ſupremely wiſe volition is neceſſary, than it argues a dependence of his being, that his exiſtence is neceſſary. If it be ſomething too low, for the Supreme Being to have his Will determined by moral Neceſſity, ſo as neceſſarily, in every caſe, to Will in the higheſt degree holily and happily; then why is it not alſo ſomething too low, for him to have his exiſtence, and the infinite perfection of his nature, and his infinite happineſs determined by Neceſſity? It is no more to God's diſhonour, to be neceſſarily wiſe, than to be neceſſarily holy. And, if neither of them be to his diſhonor, then it is not to his diſhonour neceſſarily to act holily and wiſely. And if it be not diſhonourable to be neceſſarily holy and wiſe, in the higheſt poſſible degree, no more is it mean and diſhonourable, neceſſarily to act holily and wiſely in the higheſt poſſible degree; or, which is the ſame thing, to do that, in every caſe, which, above all other things, is wiſeſt and beſt.

" of things, inſtead of being phyſically impelled; and after " that, the more ſtrong and neceſſary this determination is, the " more perfect the Deity muſt be allowed to be: it is this that " makes him an amiable and adorable Being, whoſe Will and " Power are conſtantly, immutably determined, by the con- " ſideration of what is wiſeſt and beſt; inſtead of a ſurd Be- " ing, with power, but without diſcerning and reaſon. *It is* " *the beauty of this Neceſſity, that it is ſtrong as fate itſelf, with* " *all the advantage of reaſon and goodneſs.*—It is ſtrange, to " ſee men contend, that the Deity is not free, becauſe he is " neceſſarily rational, immutably good and wiſe; when a man " is allowed ſtill the perfecter being, the more fixedly and " conſtantly his Will is determined by reaſon and truth." *Enquiry into the Nature of the Hum. Soul.* Edit. 3. Vol. II. p. 403, 404.

The reaſon, why it is not diſhonourable to be neceſſarily *moſt* holy, is, becauſe holineſs in itſelf is an excellent and honourable thing. For the ſame reaſon, it is no diſhonour to be neceſſarily *moſt* wiſe, and, in every caſe, to act moſt wiſely, or do the thing which is the wiſeſt of all; for wiſdom is alſo in itſelf excellent and honourable.

The forementioned author of the *Eſſay on the Freedom of Will*, &c. as has been obſerved, repreſents that doctrine of the Divine Will's being in every thing neceſſarily determined by ſuperior fitneſs, as making the bleſſed God a kind of Almighty Miniſter and mechanical medium of fate: and he inſiſts, p. 93, 94, that this moral Neceſſity and impoſſibility is, in effect, the ſame thing with phyſical and natural Neceſſity and impoſſibility: and in p. 54, 55, he ſays, "The ſcheme which determines the Will al-"ways and certainly by the underſtanding, and the "underſtanding by the appearance of things, ſeems "to take away the true nature of vice and virtue. "For the ſublimeſt of virtues, and the vileſt of vices, "ſeem rather to be matters of fate and Neceſſity, "flowing naturally and neceſſarily from the exiſt-"ence, the circumſtances, and preſent ſituation of "perſons and things: for this exiſtence and ſituation "neceſſarily makes ſuch an appearance to the mind; "from this appearance flows a neceſſary perception "and judgment, concerning theſe things; this "judgment, neceſſarily determines the Will: and "thus, by this chain of neceſſary cauſes, virtue and "vice would loſe their nature, and become natural "ideas, and neceſſary things, inſtead of moral and "free actions."

And yet this ſame author allows, p. 30, 31, That a perfectly wiſe being will conſtantly and certainly chooſe what is moſt fit; and ſays, p. 102, 103, "I "grant, and always have granted, that whereſoever

"there is ſuch antecedent ſuperior fitneſs of things, "God acts according to it, ſo as never to contradict "it; and, particularly in all his judicial proceedings "as a Governor, and Diſtributer of rewards and pun-"iſhments." Yea, he ſays expreſsly, p. 42, "That "it is not poſſible for God to act otherwiſe, than ac-"cording to this fitneſs and goodneſs in things."

So that according to this author, putting theſe ſeveral paſſges of this Eſſay together, there is *no virtue, nor any thing of a moral nature*, in the moſt ſublime and glorious acts and exerciſes of God's holineſs, juſtice, and faithfulneſs; and he never does any thing which is in itſelf ſupremely worthy, and, above all other things, fit and excellent, but only as a kind of mechanical medium of fate; and in *what he does as the Judge and moral Governor of the world*, he exerciſes no moral excellency; exerciſing no freedom in theſe things, becauſe he acts by moral Neceſſity, which is, in effect, the ſame with phyſical or natural Neceſſity; and, therefore, he only acts by an *Hobbiſtical* fatality; *as a Being indeed of vaſt underſtanding, as well as power and efficiency* (as he ſaid before) *but without a Will to chooſe, being a kind of Almighty Miniſter of fate, acting under its ſupreme influence*. For he allows, that in all theſe things, God's Will is determined conſtantly and certainly by a ſuperior fitneſs, and that it is not poſſible for him to act otherwiſe. And if theſe things are ſo, what glory or praiſe belongs to God for doing holily and juſtly, or taking the moſt fit, holy, wiſe and excellent courſe, in any one inſtance? Whereas, according to the Scriptures, & alſo the common ſenſe of mankind, it does not, in the leaſt, derogate from the honor of any being, that through the moral perfection of his nature, he neceſſarily acts with ſupreme wiſdom and holineſs: but on the contrary, his praiſe is the greater; herein conſiſts the height of his glory.

The ſame author, p. 56, ſuppoſes, that herein appears the excellent *character of a wiſe and good man, that though he can chooſe contrary to the fitneſs of things, yet he does not; but ſuffers himſelf to be directed by fitneſs;* and that, in this conduct, *he imitates the bleſſed God.* And yet, he ſuppoſes it is contrariwiſe with the bleſſed God; not that he ſuffers himſelf to be directed by fitneſs, when *he can chooſe contrary to the fitneſs of things*, but that *he cannot chooſe contrary to the fitneſs of things;* as he ſays, p. 42—*That it is not poſſible for God to act otherwiſe than according to this fitneſs, where there is any fitneſs or goodneſs in things:* Yea, he ſuppoſes, p. 31, That if a man *were perfectly wiſe and good, he could not do otherwiſe than be conſtantly and certainly determined by the fitneſs of things.*

One thing more I would obſerve, before I conclude this ſection; and that is, that if it derogates nothing from the glory of God, to be neceſſarily determined by ſuperior fitneſs in ſome things, then neither does it to be thus determined in all things; from any thing in the nature of ſuch Neceſſity, as at all detracting from God's freedom, independence, abſolute ſupremacy, or any dignity or glory of his nature, ſtate or manner of acting; or as implying any infirmity, reſtraint, or ſubjection. And if the thing be ſuch as well conſiſts with God's glory, and has nothing tending at all to detract from it; then we need not be afraid of aſcribing it to God in too many things, leſt thereby we ſhould detract from God's glory too much.

Section VIII.

Some further Objections againſt the moral Neceſſity of God's Volitions *conſidered.*

The author laſt cited, as has been obſerved, owns that God, being perfectly wiſe, will conſtantly and certainly chooſe what appears moſt fit, where there is a ſuperior fitneſs and goodneſs in things; and that it is not poſſible for him to do otherwiſe. So that it is in effect confeſſed, that in thoſe things where there is any real preferableneſs, it is no diſhonor, nothing in any reſpect unworthy of God, for him to act from Neceſſity; notwithſtanding all that can be objected from the agreement of ſuch a Neceſſity, with the fate of the *Stoics*, and the Neceſſity maintained by Mr. Hobbes. From which it will follow, that if it were ſo, that in all the different things, among which God chooſes, there were evermore a ſuperior fitneſs, or preferableneſs on one ſide, then it would be no diſhonor, or any thing, in any reſpect, unworthy, or unbecoming of God, for his Will to be neceſſarily determined in every thing. And if this be allowed, it is a giving up entirely the argument, from the unſuitableneſs of ſuch a Neceſſity to the liberty, ſupremacy, independence and glory of the Divine Being; and a reſting the whole weight of the affair on the deciſion of another point wholly diverſe; *viz. Whether it be ſo indeed*, that in all the various poſſible things, which are in God's view, and may be conſidered as capable objects of his choice, there is not evermore a preferableneſs in one thing above another. This is denied by this author; who ſuppoſes, that in many inſtances, between two or more poſſible things, which come within the view of the Divine Mind, there is a perfect

indifference and equality, as to fitneſs or tendency to attain any good end which God can have in view, or to anſwer any of his deſigns. Now, therefore, I would conſider whether this be evident.

The arguments brought to prove this, are of two kinds. (1.) It is urged, that in many inſtances, we muſt ſuppoſe there is abſolutely no difference between various poſſible objects of choice, which God has in view: and (2.) that the difference between many things is ſo inconſiderable, or of ſuch a nature, that it would be unreaſonable to ſuppoſe it to be of any conſequence; or to ſuppoſe that any of God's wiſe deſigns would not be anſwered in one way as well as the other.

Therefore,

I. The firſt thing to be conſidered is whether there are any inſtances wherein there is a perfect likeneſs, and abſolutely no difference, between different objects of choice, that are propoſed to the Divine Underſtanding?

And here, in the *firſt* place, it may be worthy to be conſidered, whether the contradiction there is in the *terms* of the queſtion propoſed, does not give reaſon to ſuſpect, that there is an inconſiſtence in the *thing* ſuppoſed. It is enquired, whether *different* objects of choice may not be abſolute *without difference?* If they are abſolutely *without difference*, then how are they *different* objects of choice? If there be abſolutely *no difference*, in any reſpect, then there is *no variety* or *diſtinction*: for diſtinction is only by ſome difference. And if there be no *variety* among propoſed *objects of choice*, then there is no opportunity for *variety of choice*, or difference of determination. For that determination of a thing, which is not different in any reſpect, is not a different determination, but the ſame. That this is no quibble, may appear more fully anon.

The arguments, to prove that the Moſt High, in ſome inſtances, chooſes to do one thing rather than another, where the things themſelves are perfectly without difference, are two.

1. That the various parts of infinite time and ſpace, abſolutely conſidered, are perfectly alike, and do not differ at all one from another: and that therefore, when God determined to create the world in ſuch a part of infinite duration and ſpace, rather than others, he determined and preferred, among various objects, between which there was no preferableneſs, and abſolutely no difference.

Anſw. This objection ſuppoſes an infinite length of time before the world was created, diſtinguiſhed by ſucceſſive parts, properly and truly ſo; or a ſucceſſion of limited and unmeaſurable periods of time, following one another, in an infinitely long ſeries: which muſt needs be a groundleſs imagination. The eternal duration which was before the world, being only the eternity of God's exiſtence; which is nothing elſe but his immediate, perfect and invariable poſſeſſion of the whole of his unlimited life, together and at once; *Vitæ interminabilis, tota, ſimul and perfecta poſſeſſio.* Which is ſo generally allowed, that I need not ſtand to demonſtrate it.*

* 'If all created beings were taken away, all poſſibility 'of any mutation or ſucceſſion, of one thing to another, 'would appear to be alſo removed. Abſtract ſucceſſion in 'eternity is ſcarce to be underſtood. What is it that ſuc- 'ceeds? One minute to another, perhaps, *velut undæ ſuper- 'venit undam.* But when we imagine this, we fancy that the 'minutes are things ſeparately exiſting. This is the common 'notion; and yet it is a manifeſt prejudice. Time is noth- 'ing but the exiſtence of created ſucceſſive beings, and eter- 'nity the neceſſary exiſtence of the Deity. Therefore, if 'this neceſſary being hath no change or ſucceſſion in his na- 'ture, his exiſtence muſt of courſe be unſucceſſive. We 'ſeem to commit a double overſight in this caſe; *firſt*, we

So this objection supposes an extent of space beyond the limits of the creation, of an infinite length, breadth and depth, truly and properly distinguished into different measurable parts, limited at certain stages, one beyond another, in an infinite series. Which notion of absolute and infinite space is doubtless as unreasonable, as that now mentioned, of absolute and infinite duration. It is as improper to imagine that the immensity and omnipresence of God is distinguished by a series of miles and leagues, one beyond another; as that the infinite duration of God is distinguished by months and years, one after another. A diversity and order of distinct parts, limited by certain periods, is as conceivable, and does as naturally obtrude itself on our imagination,

'find succession in the necessary nature and existence of the 'Deity himself: which is wrong, if the reasoning above be 'conclusive. And *then* we ascribe this succession to eternity, 'considered abstractedly from the Eternal Being; and suppose it, one knows not what, a thing subsisting by itself, and 'flowing one minute after another. This is the work of pure 'imagination, and contrary to the reality of things. Hence 'the common metaphorical expressions; *Time runs a-pace, 'let us lay hold on the present minute*, and the like. The philosophers themselves mislead us by their illustration. They 'compare eternity to the motion of a point running on for 'ever, and making a traceless infinite line. Here the point is 'supposed a thing actually subsisting, representing the present 'minute; and then they ascribe motion or succession to it: 'that is, they ascribe motion to a mere nonentity, to illustrate 'to us a successive eternity, made up of finite successive parts. 'If once we allow an all-perfect mind, which hath an eternal, 'immutable and infinite comprehension of all things, always '(and allow it we must) the distinction of past and future vanishes with respect to such a mind.—In a word, if we proceed step by step, as above, the eternity or existence of the 'Deity will appear to be *Vitæ interminabilis, tota, simul & 'perfecta possessio*; how much soever this may have been a 'paradox hitherto." *Enquiry into the Nature of the Human Soul.* Vol. II. 409, 410, 411. Edit 3.

in one caſe as the other; and there as equal reaſon in each caſe, to ſuppoſe that our imagination deceives us. It is equally improper to talk of months and years of the Divine Exiſtence, and mile-ſquares of Deity: and we equally deceive ourſelves, when we talk of the world's being differently fix'd with reſpect to either of theſe ſorts of meaſures. I think, we know not what we mean, if we ſay, the world might have been differently placed from what it is, in the broad expanſe of infinity: or, that it might have been differently fixed in the long line of eternity: and all arguments and objections, which are built on the imaginations we are apt to have of infinite extenſion or duration, are buildings founded on ſhadows, or caſtles in the air.

2. The ſecond argument, to prove that the Moſt High wills one thing rather than another, without any ſuperior fitneſs or preferableneſs in the thing preferred, is God's actually placing in different parts of the world, particles, or atoms of matter, that are perfectly equal and alike. The forementioned author ſays, p. 78, *&c.* "If one would deſcend to the "minute ſpecific particles, of which different bodies "are compoſed, we ſhould ſee abundant reaſon to "believe, that there are thouſands of ſuch little par-"ticles, or atoms of matter, which are perfectly equal "and alike, and could give no diſtinct determina-"tion to the Will of God, where to place them." He there inſtances in particles of water, of which there are ſuch immenſe numbers, which compoſe the rivers and oceans of this world; and the infinite myriads of the luminous and fiery particles, which compoſe the body of the Sun; ſo many, that it would be very unreaſonable to ſuppoſe no two of them ſhould be exactly equal and alike.

Anſw. (1.) To this I anſwer: that as we muſt ſuppoſe matter to be infinitely diviſible, it is very unlikely, that any two, of all theſe particles, are exact-

ly equal and alike; so unlikely, that it is a thousand to one, yea, an infinite number to one, but it is otherwise: and that although we should allow a great similarity between the different particles of water and fire, as to their general nature and figure; and however small we suppose those particles to be, it is infinitely unlikely, that any two of them should be exactly equal in dimensions and quantity of matter. If we should suppose a great many globes of the same nature with the globe of the earth, it would be very strange, if there were any two of them that had exactly the same number of particles of dust and water in them. But infinitely less strange, than that two particles of light should have just the same quantity of matter. For a particle of light, according to the doctrine of the infinite divisibility of matter, is composed of infinitely more assignable parts, than there are particles of dust and water in the globe of the earth. And as it is infinitely unlikely, that any two of these particles should be *equal;* so it is, that they should be *alike* in other respects: to instance in the configuration of their surfaces. If there were very many globes, of the nature of the earth, it would be very unlikely that any two should have exactly the same number of particles of dust, water and stone, in their surfaces, and all posited exactly alike, one with respect to another, without any difference, in any part discernable either by the naked eye or microscope; but infinitely less strange, than that two particles of light should be perfectly of the same figure. For there are infinitely more assignable real parts on the surface of a particle of light, than there are particles of dust, water and stone, on the surface of the terrestrial Globe.

Answ. (2.) But then, supposing that there are two particles, or atoms of matter, perfectly equal and alike, which God has placed in different parts of the creation; as I will not deny it to be possible for God

to make two bodies perfectly alike, and put them in different places; yet it will not follow. that two different or distinct acts or effects of the Divine Power have exactly the same fitness for the same ends. For these two different bodies are not different or distinct, in any other respects than those wherein they *differ*: they are two in no other respects than those wherein there is a difference. If they are perfectly equal and alike *in themselves*, then they can be distinguished, or be distinct, only in those things which are called *circumstances*; as place, time, rest, motion, or some other present or past circumstances or relations. For it is difference only that constitutes distinction. If God makes two bodies, *in themselves* every way equal and alike, and agreeing perfectly in all other circumstances and relations, but only *their place*; then in this only is their any distinction or duplicity. The figure is the same, the measure is the same, the solidity and resistance are the same, and every thing the same, but only the place. Therefore what the Will of God determines, is this, namely, that there should be the same figure, the same extension, the same resistance, *&c.* in two different places. And for this determination he has some reason. There is some end, for which such a determination and act has a peculiar fitness, above all other acts. Here is no one thing determined without an end, and no one thing without a fitness for that end, superior to any thing else. If it be the pleasure of God to cause the same resistance, and the same figure, to be in two different places and situations, we can no more justly argue from it, that here must be some determination or act of God's Will, that is wholly without motive or end, then we can argue, that whenever, in any case it is a man's Will to speak the same words, or make the same sounds at two different times; there must be some determination or act of his Will,

without any motive or end. The difference of place, in the former case, proves no more than the difference of time does in the other. If any one should say, with regard to the former case, that there must be something without an end, *viz.* that of those two similar bodies, this in particular should be made in this place, and the other in the other, and should inquire, why the Creator did not make them in a transposition, when both are alike, and each would equally have suited either place? The inquiry supposes something that is not true, namely, that the two bodies differ and are distinct in other respects besides their place. So that with this distinction, *inherent* in them, they might, in their first creation, have been transposed, and each might have begun its existence in the place of the other.

Let us, for clearness sake, suppose, that God had, at the beginning, made two globes, each of an inch diameter, both perfect spheres, and perfectly solid, without pores, and perfectly alike in every respect, and placed them near one to another, one towards the right hand, and the other towards the left, without any difference as to time, motion or rest, past or present, or any circumstance, but only their place; and the question should be asked, why God in their creation placed them so? Why that which is made on the right hand, was not made on the left, and *vice versa?* Let it be well considered, whether there be any sense in such a question; and whether the inquiry does not suppose something false and absurd. Let it be considered, what the Creator must have done otherwise than he did, what different act of Will or power he must have exerted, in order to the thing proposed. All that could have been done, would have been to have made two spheres, perfectly alike, in the same places where he has made them, without any difference of the things made, either in

themſelves or in any circumſtance; ſo that the whole effect would have been without any difference, and, therefore, juſt the ſame. By the ſuppoſition, the two ſpheres are different in no other reſpect but their place: and therefore in no other reſpects they are the ſame. Each has the ſame roundneſs; it is not a diſtinct rotundity, in any other reſpect but its ſituation. There are, alſo, the ſame dimenſions, differing in nothing but their place. And ſo of their reſiſtance, and every thing elſe that belongs to them.

Here, if any chooſes to ſay, "that there is a difference in another reſpect, *viz.* that they are not NUMERICALLY the ſame: that is thus with all the qualities that belong to them: that it is confeſſed they are, in ſome reſpects, the ſame; that is, they are both exactly alike; but yet *numerically* they differ. Thus the roundneſs of one is not the ſame *numerical individual* roundneſs with that of the other." Let this be ſuppoſed; then the queſtion about the determination of the Divine Will in the affair, is, why did God Will, that this *individual* roundneſs ſhould be at the right hand, and the other *individual* roundneſs at the left? Why did not he make them in a contrary poſition? Let any rational perſon conſider, whether ſuch queſtions be not words without a meaning; as much as if God ſhould ſee fit for ſome ends, to cauſe the ſame ſounds to be repeated, or made at two different times; the ſounds being perfectly the ſame in every other reſpect, but only one was a minute after the other; and it ſhould be aſked, upon it, why God cauſed theſe ſounds, numerically different, to ſucceed one the other in ſuch a manner? Why he did not make that individual ſound, which was in the firſt minute, to be in the ſecond? And the individual ſound of the laſt minute to be in the firſt; which inquiries would be even ridiculous; as, I think, every perſon muſt ſee, at once, in the caſe

propoſed of two ſounds, being only the ſame repeated, abſolutely without any difference, but that one circumſtance of time. If the Moſt High ſees it will anſwer ſome good end, that the ſame ſound ſhould be made by lightning at two diſtinct times, and therefore Wills that it ſhould be ſo, muſt it needs therefore be, that herein there is ſome act of God's Will without any motive or end? God ſaw fit often, at diſtinct times, and on different occaſions, to ſay the very ſame words to Moſes, namely, thoſe, *I am Jehovah.* And would it not be unreaſonable to infer, as a certain conſequence, from this, that here muſt be ſome act or acts of the Divine Will, in determining and diſpoſing theſe words exactly alike, at different times wholly without aim or inducement? But it would be no more unreaſonable than to ſay, that there muſt be an act of God's without any inducement, if he ſees it beſt, and, for ſome reaſons, determines that there ſhall be the ſame reſiſtance, the ſame dimenſions, and the ſame figure, in ſeveral diſtinct places.

If, in the inſtance of the two ſpheres, perfectly alike, it be ſuppoſed poſſible that God might have made them in a contrary poſition; that which is made at the right hand, being made at the left; then I aſk, Whether it is not evidently equally poſſible, if God had made but one of them, and that in the place of the right hand globe, that he might have made that numerically different from what it is, and numerically different from what he did make it; though perfectly alike, and in the ſame place: and at the ſame time, and in every reſpect, in the ſame circumſtances and relations? Namely, Whether he might not have made it numerically the ſame with that which he has now made at the left hand; and ſo have left that which is now created at the right hand, in a ſtate of non-exiſtence? And, if ſo, wheth-

er it would not have been poſſible to have made one in that place, perfectly like theſe, and yet numerically differing from both? And let it be conſidered, whether, from this notion of a numerical difference in bodies, perfectly equal and alike, which numerical difference is ſomething inherent in the bodies themſelves, and diverſe from the difference of place or time, or any circumſtance whatſoever; it will not follow, that there is an infinite number of numerically different poſſible bodies, perfectly alike, among which God chooſes, by a ſelf-determining power, when he goes about to create bodies.

Therefore let us put the caſe thus: ſuppoſing that God, in the beginning, had created but one perfectly ſolid ſphere, in a certain place; and it ſhould be inquired, Why God created that individual ſphere, in that place, at that time? And why he did not create another ſphere perfectly like it, but numerically different, in the ſame place, at the ſame time? Or why he choſe to bring into being there, that very body, rather than any of the infinite number of other bodies, perfectly like it; either of which he could have made there as well, and would have anſwered his end as well? Why he cauſed to exiſt, at that place and time, that individual roundneſs, rather than any other of the infinite number of individual rotundities juſt like it? Why that individual reſiſtance, rather than any other of the infinite number of poſſible reſiſtances juſt like it? And it might as reaſonably be aſked, Why, when God firſt cauſed it to thunder, he cauſed that individual ſound then to be made, and not another juſt like it? Why did he make choice of this very ſound, and reject all the infinite number of other poſſible ſounds juſt like it, but numerically differing from it, and all differing one from another? I think, every body muſt be ſenſible of the abſurdity and nonſenſe of what is ſuppoſ-

ed in such enquiries. And, if we calmly attend to the matter, we shall be convinced, that all such kind of objections as I am answering, are founded on nothing but the imperfection of our manner of conceiving things, and the obscureness of language, and great want of clearness and precision in the signification of terms.

If any shall find fault with this reasoning, that it is going a great length into metaphysical nicetics and subtilties; I answer, the objection which they are in reply to, is a metaphysical subtilty, and must be treated according to the nature of it.*

II. Another thing alledged is, that innumerable things which are determined by the Divine Will, and chosen and done by God rather than others, differ from those that are not chosen in so inconsiderable a manner, that it would be unreasonable to suppose the difference to be of any consequence, or that there is any superior fitness or goodness, that God can have respect to in the determination.

To which I answer; it is impossible for us to determine, with any certainty or evidence, that because the difference is very small, and appears to us of no consideration, therefore there is absolutely no superior goodness, and no valuable end, which can be proposed by the Creator and Governor of the world, in ordering such a difference. The forementioned author mentions many instances. One is, there being one atom in the whole universe more or less. But, I think, it would be unreasonable to suppose, that God made one atom in vain, or without any end or motive. He made not one atom, but what was a work of his Almighty Power, as much as the

* "For men to have recourse to subtilties, in raising difficulties, and then complain, that they should be taken off by "minutely examining these subtilties, is a strange kind of "procedure." *Nature of the Human Soul*, vol. 2. p. 331.

whole globe of the earth, and requires as much of a conſtant exertion of Almighty Power to uphold it; and was made and is upheld underſtandingly, and on deſign, as much as if no other had been made but that. And it would be as unreaſonable to ſuppoſe, that he made it without any thing really aimed at in ſo doing, as much as to ſuppoſe, that he made the planet Jupiter without aim or deſign.

It is poſſible, that the moſt minute effects of the Creator's power, the ſmalleſt aſſignable difference between the things which God has made, may be attended, in the whole ſeries of events, and the whole compaſs and extent of their influence, with very great and important conſequences. If the laws of motion and gravitation, laid down by Sir Iſaac Newton, hold univerſally, there is not one atom, nor the leaſt aſſignable part of an atom, but what has influence, every moment, throughout the whole material univerſe, to cauſe every part to be otherwiſe than it would be, if it were not for that particular corporeal exiſtence. And however the effect is inſenſible for the preſent, yet it may, in length of time, become great and important.

To illuſtrate this, let us ſuppoſe two bodies moving the ſame way, in ſtraight lines, perfectly parallel one to another; but to be diverted from this parallel courſe, and drawn one from another, as much as might be by the attraction of an atom, at the diſtance of one of the furtheſt of the fixed ſtars from the earth; theſe bodies being turned out of the lines of their parallel motion, will, by degrees, get further and further diſtant, one from the other; and though the diſtance may be imperceptible for a long time, yet at length it may become very great. So the revolution of a planet round the ſun being retarded or accelerated, and the orbit of its revolution made greater or leſs, and more or leſs elliptical, and ſo its periodical time

longer or ſhorter, no more than may be by the influence of the leaſt atom, might, in length of time, perform a whole revolution ſooner or later than otherwiſe it would have done; which might make a vaſt alteration with regard to millions of important events. So the influence of the leaſt particle may, for ought we know, have ſuch effect on ſomething in the conſtitution of ſome human body, as to cauſe another thought to ariſe in the mind at a certain time, than otherwiſe would have been; which, in length of time, (yea, and that not very great) might occaſion a vaſt alteration through the whole world of mankind. And ſo innumerable other ways might be mentioned, wherein the leaſt aſſignable alteration may poſſibly be attended with great conſequences.

Another *argument*, which the forementioned author brings againſt a neceſſary determination of the Divine Will, by a ſuperior fitneſs, is, that ſuch doctrine derogates from the *freeneſs* of God's *grace* and *goodneſs*, in chooſing the objects of his favour and bounty, and from the *obligation* upon men to *thankfulneſs* for ſpecial benefits. P. 89, *&c.*

In anſwer to this objection, I would obſerve,

1. That it derogates no more from the goodneſs of God, to ſuppoſe the exerciſe of the benevolence of his nature to be determined by wiſdom, than to ſuppoſe it determined by chance, and that his favours are beſtowed altogether at random, his Will being determined by nothing but perfect accident, without any end or deſign whatſoever; which muſt be the caſe, as has been demonſtrated, if volition be not determined by a prevailing motive. That which is owing to perfect contingence, wherein neither previous inducement, nor antecedent choice has any hand, is not owing more to goodneſs or benevolence, than that which is owing to the influence of a wiſe end.

2. It is acknowledged, that if the motive that determines the Will of God, in the choice of the objects of his favours, be any moral quality in the object, recommending that object to his benevolence above others, his chooſing that object is not ſo great a manifeſtation of the freeneſs and ſovereignty of his grace, as if it were otherwiſe. But there is no Neceſſity of ſuppoſing this, in order to our ſuppoſing that he has ſome wiſe end in view, in determining to beſtow his favours on one perſon rather than another. We are to diſtinguiſh between the *merit of the object of God's favour*, or a moral qualification of *the object* attracting that favour and recommending to it, and the *natural fitneſs* of ſuch a determination *of the act of God's goodneſs*, to anſwer ſome wiſe deſign of his own, ſome end in the view of God's omniſcience. It is God's own act, that is the proper and immediate object of his volition.

3. I ſuppoſe that none will deny, but that, in ſome inſtances, God acts from wiſe deſign in determining the particular ſubjects of his favours: none will ſay, I preſume, that when God diſtinguiſhes, by his bounty, particular ſocieties, or perſons, He never, in any inſtance, exerciſes any wiſdom in ſo doing, aiming at ſome happy conſequence. And, if it be not denied to be ſo in ſome inſtances, then I would enquire, whether, in theſe inſtances, God's goodneſs is leſs manifeſted, than in thoſe wherein God has no aim or end at all? And whether the ſubjects have leſs cauſe of thankfulneſs? And if ſo, who ſhall be thankful for the beſtowment of diſtinguiſhing mercy, with that enhancing circumſtance of the diſtinction's being made without an end? How ſhall it be known when God is influenced by ſome wiſe aim, and when not? It is very manifeſt, with reſpect to the Apoſtle Paul, that God had wiſe ends in chooſing him to be a chriſtian and an Apoſtle, who had been a perſecutor,

&c. The Apostle himself mentions one end. 1 Tim. i. 15, 16. *Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners, of whom I am chief. Howbeit, for this cause I obtained mercy, that in me first, Jesus Christ might shew forth all long-suffering, for a pattern to them who should hereafter believe on Him to life everlasting.* But yet the Apostle never looked on it as a diminution of the freedom and riches of Divine Grace in his election, which he so often and so greatly magnifies. This brings me to observe,

4. Our supposing such a moral necessity in the acts of God's Will, as has been spoken of, is so far from necessarily derogating from the riches of God's grace to such as are the chosen objects of his favour, that, in many instances, this moral necessity may arise from goodness, and from the great degree of it. God may choose this object rather than another, as having a superior fitness to answer the ends, designs and inclinations of his goodness; being more sinful, and so more miserable and necessitous than others; the inclinations of Infinite Mercy and Benevolence may be more gratified, and the gracious design of God's sending his Son into the world, may be more abundantly answered, in the exercises of mercy towards such an object, rather than another.

One thing more I would observe, before I finish what I have to say on the head of the Necessity of the acts of God's Will; and that is, that something much more like a servile subjection of the Divine Being to fatal Necessity, will follow from *Arminian* principles, than from the doctrines which they oppose. For they (at least most of them) suppose, with respect to all events that happen in the moral world, depending on the volitions of moral agents, which are the most important events of the universe, to which all others are subordinate; I say, they suppose, with respect to these, that God has a certain

foreknowledge of them, antecedent to any purpoſes or decrees of his about them. And if ſo, they have a fixed certain futurity, prior to any deſigns or volitions of his, and independent on them, and to which his volitions muſt be ſubject, as he would wiſely accommodate his affairs to this fixed futurity of the ſtate of things in the moral world. So that here, inſtead of a moral neceſſity of God's Will, ariſing from, or conſiſting in, the infinite perfection and bleſſedneſs of the Divine Being, we have a fixed unalterable ſtate of things, properly diſtinct from the perfect nature of the Divine Mind, and the ſtate of the Divine Will and Deſign, and entirely independent on theſe things, and which they have no hand in, becauſe they are prior to them; and which God's Will is truly ſubject to, being obliged to conform or accommodate himſelf to it, in all his purpoſes and decrees, and in every thing he does in his diſpoſals and government of the world; the moral world being the end of the natural; ſo that all is in vain, that is not accommodated to that ſtate of the moral world which conſiſts in, or depends upon, the acts and ſtate of the wills of moral agents, which had a fixed futurition from eternity. Such a ſubjection to neceſſity as this, would truly argue an inferiority and ſervitude, that would be unworthy the Supreme Being; and is much more agreeable to the notion which many of the heathen had of Fate, as above the gods, than that moral neceſſity of fitneſs and wiſdom which has been ſpoken of; and is truly repugnant to the abſolute ſovereignty of God, and inconſiſtent with the ſupremacy of his Will; and really ſubjects the Will of the Moſt High, to the Will of his creatures, and brings him into dependence upon them.

Section IX.

Concerning that Objection againſt the Doctrine which has been maintained, that it makes GOD the Author of Sin.

It is urged by *Arminians*, that the doctrine of the neceſſity of men's volitions, or their neceſſary connexion with antecedent events and circumſtances, makes the firſt cauſe, and ſupreme orderer of all things, the Author of Sin; in that he has ſo conſtituted the ſtate and courſe of things, that ſinful volitions become neceſſary, in conſequence of his diſpoſal. Dr. Whitby, in his Diſcourſe on the Freedom of the Will,* cites one of the antients, as on his ſide, declaring that this opinion of the neceſſity of the Will "abſolves Sinners, as doing nothing of "their own accord which was evil, and would caſt "all the blame of all the wickedneſs committed in "the world, upon God, and upon his Providence, "if that were admitted by the aſſertors of this fate; "whether he himſelf did neceſſitate them to do theſe "things, or ordered matters ſo, that they ſhould be "conſtrained to do them by ſome other cauſe." And the doctor ſays, in another place,† "In the na"ture of the thing, and in the opinion of philoſo"phers, *cauſa deficiens, in rebus neceſſariis, ad cauſam "per ſe efficientem reducenda eſt.* In things neceſſary "the deficient cauſe muſt be reduced to the efficient. "And in this caſe the reaſon is evident; becauſe "the not doing what is required, or not avoiding "what is forbidden, being a defect, muſt follow from "the poſition of the neceſſary cauſe of that defi"ciency."

* On the Five Points, p. 361. † *Ibid*, p. 486.

Concerning this, I would obſerve the following things.

I. If there be any difficulty in this matter, it is nothing peculiar to this ſcheme; it is no difficulty or diſadvantage, wherein it is diſtinguiſhed from the ſcheme of *Arminians;* and, therefore, not reaſonably objected by them.

Dr. Whitby ſuppoſes, that if Sin neceſſarily follows from God's withholding aſſiſtance, or if that aſſiſtance be not given, which is abſolutely neceſſary to the avoiding of evil; then, in the nature of the thing, God muſt be as properly the Author of that evil, as if he were the efficient cauſe of it. From whence, according to what he himſelf ſays of the devils and damned ſpirits, God muſt be the proper Author of their perfect unreſtrained wickedneſs: he muſt be the efficient cauſe of the great pride of the devils, and of their perfect malignity againſt God, Chriſt, his ſaints, and all that is good, and of the inſatiable cruelty of their diſpoſition. For he allows, that God has ſo forſaken them, and does ſo withhold his aſſiſtance from them, that they are incapaciated from doing good, and determined only to evil.* Our doctrine, in its conſequence, makes God the Author of men's Sin in this world, no more, and in no other ſenſe, than his doctrine, in its conſequence, makes God the Author of the helliſh pride and malice of the devils. And doubtleſs the latter is as odious an effect as the former.

Aagain, if it will *follow at all*, that God is the Author of Sin, from what has been ſuppoſed of a ſure and infallible connexion between antecedents and conſequents, it will *follow becauſe of this, viz.* that for God to be the Author or Orderer of thoſe things which, he knows before-hand, will infallibly be attended with ſuch a conſequence, is the ſame thing,

* On the Five Points, p. 302, 305.

in effect, as for him to be the Author of that consequence. But, if this be so, this is a difficulty which equally attends the doctrine of *Arminians* themselves; at least, of those of them who allow God's certain fore-knowledge of all events. For, on the supposition of such a fore-knowledge, this is the case with respect to every sin that is committed: God knew, that if he ordered and brought to pass such and such events, such sins would infallibly follow. As for instance, God certainly foreknew, long before Judas was born, that if he ordered things so, that there should be such a man born, at such a time, and at such a place, and that his life should be preserved, and that he should, in Divine Providence, be led into acquaintance with Jesus; and that his heart should be so influenced by God's Spirit of Providence, as to be inclined to be a follower of Christ; and that he should be one of those twelve, which should be chosen constantly to attend him as his family; and that his health should be preserved, so that he should go up to Jerusalem, at the last Passover in Christ's life; and it should be so ordered, that Judas should see Christ's kind treatment of the woman which anointed him at Bethany, and have that reproof from Christ, which he had at that time, and see and hear other things, which excited his enmity against his Master, and other circumstances should be ordered, as they were ordered; it would be what would most certainly and infallibly follow, that Judas would betray his Lord, and would soon after hang himself, and die impenitent, and be sent to hell, for his horrid wickedness.

Therefore, this supposed difficulty ought not to be brought as an objection against the scheme which has been maintained, as *disagreeing* with the *Arminian* scheme, seeing it is no difficulty owing to such a *disagreement*; but a difficulty wherein the *Arminians*

ſhare with us. That muſt be unreaſonably made an objection againſt our differing from them, which we ſhould not eſcape or avoid at all by agreeing with them.

And therefore I would obſerve,

II. They who object, that this doctrine makes God the Author of Sin, ought diſtinctly to explain what they mean by that phraſe, *The Author of Sin.* I know the phraſe, as it is commonly uſed, ſignifies ſomething very ill. If by *the Author of Sin.* be meant *the Sinner, the Agent,* or *Actor of Sin,* or *the Doer of a wicked thing;* ſo it would be a reproach and blaſphemy, to ſuppoſe God to be the Author of Sin. In this ſenſe, I utterly deny God to be the Author of Sin; rejecting ſuch an imputation on the Moſt High, as what is infinitely to be abhorred; and deny any ſuch thing to be the conſequence of what I have laid down. But if, by *the Author of Sin,* is meant the permitter, or not a hinderer of Sin; and, at the ſame time, a diſpoſer of the ſtate of events, in ſuch a manner, for wiſe, holy, and moſt excellent ends and purpoſes, that Sin, if it be permitted or not hindered, will moſt certainly and infallibly follow: I ſay, if this be all that is meant, by being the Author of Sin, I do not deny that God is the Author of Sin, (though I diſlike and reject the phraſe, as that which by uſe and cuſtom is apt to carry another ſenſe) it is no reproach for the Moſt High to be thus the Author of Sin. This is not to be the *Actor of Sin,* but, on the contrary, *of holineſs.* What God doth herein, is holy; and a glorious exerciſe of the infinite excellency of his nature. And, I do not deny, that God's being thus the Author of Sin, follows from what I have laid down; and, I aſſert, that it equally follows from the doctrine which is maintained by moſt of the *Arminian* divines.

That it is moſt certainly ſo, that God is in ſuch a

manner the Diſpoſer and Orderer of Sin, is evident, if any credit is to be given to the Scripture; as well as becauſe it is impoſſible, in the nature of things, to be otherwiſe. In ſuch a manner God ordered the obſtinacy of Pharaoh, in his refuſing to obey God's commands, to let the people go. Exod. iv. 21. *I will harden his heart, and he ſhall not let the people go.* Chap. vii. 2—5. *Aaron thy brother ſhall ſpeak unto Pharaoh, that he ſend the children of Iſrael out of his land. And I will harden Pharaoh's heart, and multiply my ſigns and my wonders in the land of Egypt. But Pharaoh ſhall not hearken unto you; that I may lay mine hand upon Egypt, by great judgments, &c.* Chap. ix. 12. *And the Lord hardened the heart of Pharaoh, and he hearkened not unto them, as the Lord had ſpoken unto Moſes.* Chap. x. 1, 2. *And the Lord ſaid unto Moſes, Go in unto Pharaoh; for I have hardened his heart and the heart of his ſervants, that I might ſhew theſe my ſigns before him, and that thou mayſt tell it in the ears of thy ſon, and thy ſon's ſon, what things I have wrought in Egypt, and my ſigns which I have done amongſt them, that ye may know that I am the Lord.* Chap. xiv. 4. *And I will harden Pharaoh's heart, that he ſhall follow after them: and I will be honoured upon Pharaoh, and upon all his Hoſt.* Ver. 8. *And the Lord hardened the heart of Pharaoh King of Egypt, and he purſued after the Children of Iſrael.* And it is certain, that in ſuch a manner God, for wiſe and good ends, ordered that event, Joſeph's being ſold into Egypt, by his brethren. Gen. xlv. 5. *Now, therefore, be not grieved, nor angry with yourſelves, that ye ſold me hither; for God did ſend me before you to preſerve life.* Ver 7, 8. *God did ſend me before you to preſerve a poſterity in the earth, and to ſave your lives by a great deliverance: ſo that now it was not you, that ſent me hither, but God.* Pſal. cvii. 17. *He ſent a man before them, even Joſeph, who was ſold for a ſervant.* It is certain, that thus God order-

ed the Sin and folly of Sihon King of the Amorites, in refuſing to let the people of Iſrael paſs by him peaceably. Deut. ii. 30. *But Sihon King of Heſhbon would not let us paſs by him; for the Lord thy God hardened his ſpirit, and made his heart obſtinate, that he might deliver him into thine hand.* It is certain, that God thus ordered the Sin and folly of the Kings of Canaan, that they attempted not to make peace with Iſrael, but, with a ſtupid boldneſs and obſtinacy, ſet themſelves violently to oppoſe them and their God.—Joſh. xi. 20. *For it was of the Lord, to harden their hearts, that they ſhould come againſt Iſrael in battle, that he might deſtroy them utterly, and that they might have no favour; but that he might deſtroy them, as the Lord commanded Moſes.* It is evident, that thus God ordered the treacherous rebellion of Zedekiah againſt the King of Babylon. Jer. lii. 3. *For through the anger of the Lord it came to paſs in Jeruſalem, and Judah, until he had caſt them out from his preſence, that Zedekiah rebelled againſt the King of Babylon.* So 2 Kings xxiv. 20. And it is exceeding manifeſt, that God thus ordered the rapine and unrighteous ravages of Nebuchadnezzar, in ſpoiling and ruining the nations round about. Jer. xxv. 9. *Behold, I will ſend and take all the families of the north, ſaith the Lord, and Nebuchadnezzar, my ſervant, and will bring them againſt this land, and againſt all the nations round about; and will utterly deſtroy them, and make them an aſtoniſhment, and an hiſſing, and perpetual deſolations.* Chap. xliii. 10, 11. *I will ſend and take Nebuchadnezzar the king of Babylon, my ſervant: and I will ſet his throne upon theſe ſtones that I have hid, and he ſhall ſpread his royal pavillion over them. And when he cometh, he ſhall ſmite the land of Egypt, and deliver ſuch as are for death to death, and ſuch as are for captivity to captivity, and ſuch as are for the ſword to the ſword.* Thus God repreſents himſelf as *ſending* for Nebuchadnezzar, and

taking of him and his armies, and *bringing* him against the nations, which were to be destroyed by him, to that very end, that he might utterly destroy them, and make them desolate; and as appointing the work that he should do, so particularly, that the very persons were designed that he should kill with the sword, and those that should be killed with famine and pestilence, and those that should be carried into captivity; and that in doing all these things, he should act as his servant; by which, less cannot be intended, than that he should serve his purposes and designs. And in Jer. xxvii. 4, 5, 6; God declares, how he would cause him thus to serve his designs, *viz.* by bringing this to pass in his sovereign disposal, as the great Possessor and Governor of the Universe, that disposes all things just as pleases him. *Thus saith the Lord of Hosts, the God of Israel; I have made the earth, the man and the beast, that are upon the ground, by my great power, and my stretched out arm, and have given it unto whom it seemed meet unto me: and now I have given all these lands unto the hands of Nebuchadnezzar,* MY SERVANT, *and the beasts of the field have I given also to serve him.* And Nebuchadnezzar is spoken of as doing these things, by having his *arms strengthened* by God, and having *God's sword put into his hands, for this end.* Ezek. xxx. 24, 25, 26. Yea, God speaks of his terrible ravaging and wasting the nations, and cruelly destroying all sorts, without distinction of sex or age, as the weapon in God's hand, and the instrument of his indignation, which God makes use of to fulfil his own purposes, and execute his own vengeance. Jer. li. 20, &c. *Thou art my battle-axe, and weapons of war: For with thee will I break in pieces the nations, and with thee will I destroy kingdoms, and with thee will I break in pieces the horse and his rider, and with thee will I break in pieces the chariot and his rider; with thee also will I break in*

pieces man and woman, and with thee will I break in pieces old and young, and with thee will I break in pieces the young man and the maid, &c. It is repreſented, that the deſigns of Nebuchadnezzar, and thoſe that deſtroyed Jeruſalem, never could have been accompliſhed, had not God determined them, as well as they. Lam. iii. 37. *Who is he that ſaith, and it cometh to paſs, and the Lord commandeth it not?* And yet the King of Babylon's thus deſtroying the nations, and eſpecially the *Jews*, is ſpoken of as his great wickedneſs, for which God finally deſtroyed him. Iſa. xiv. 4, 5, 6, 12. Hab. ii. 5—12, and Jer. chap. l. and li. It is moſt manifeſt, that God, to ſerve his own deſigns, providentially ordered Shimei's curſing David. 2 Sam. xvi. 10, 11. *The Lord hath ſaid unto him, curſe David—Let him curſe, for the Lord hath bidden him.*

It is certain, that God thus, for excellent, holy, gracious and glorious ends, ordered the fact which they committed, who were concerned in Chriſt's death; and that therein they did but fulfil God's deſigns. As, I truſt, no Chriſtian will deny it was the deſign of God, that Chriſt ſhould *be crucified*, and that for this end, he came into the world. It is very manifeſt, by many Scriptures, that the whole affair of Chriſt's crucifixion, with its circumſtances, and the treachery of Judas, that made way for it, was ordered in God's Providence, in purſuance of his purpoſe; notwithſtanding the violence that is uſed with thoſe plain Scriptures, to obſcure and pervert the ſenſe of them. Acts ii. 23. *Him being delivered, by the determinate counſel and fore knowledge of God,* ye have taken, and with wicked hands, have cru-*

* "Grotius, as well as Beza, obſerves, *prognoſis* muſt here "ſignify decree; and Elſner has ſhewn that it has that ſigni-"fication, in approved Greek writers. And it is certain "*Ekaotos* ſignifies one given up into the hands of an enemy." Dodd. in Loc.

cified and slain. Luke xxii. 21, 22.† *But behold the hand of him that betrayeth me, is with me on the table: and truly the Son of Man goeth, as it was determined.* Acts iv. 27, 28. *For of a truth, against thy holy child Jesus, whom thou hast anointed, both Herod, and Pontius Pilate, with the Gentiles, and the people of Israel, were gathered together, for to do whatsoever thy hand and thy counsel determined before to be done.* Acts iii. 17, 18. *And now, brethren, I wot that through ignorance ye did it, as did also your rulers: but these things, which God before had shewed by the mouth of all his prophets, that Christ should suffer, he hath so fulfilled.* So that what these murderers of Christ did, is spoken of as what God brought to pass or ordered, and that by which he fulfilled his own word.

In Rev. xvii. 17, *The agreeing of the Kings of the earth to give their kingdom to the beast*, though it was a very wicked thing in them, is spoken of as *a fulfilling God's Will*, and what *God had put into their hearts to do.* It is manifest, that God sometimes permits Sin to be committed, and at the same time orders things so, that if he permits the fact, it will come to pass, because, on some accounts, he sees it needful and of importance, that it should come to pass. Matt. xviii. 7. *It must needs be, that offences come; but wo to that man by whom the offence cometh.* With 1 Cor. xi. 19. *For there must also be heresies among you, that they which are approved may be made manifest among you.*

† "As this passage is not liable to the ambiguities, which "some have apprehended in Acts ii. 23, and iv. 28, (which "yet seem on the whole to be parallel to it, in their most na-"tural construction) I look upon it as an evident proof, that "these things are, in the language of Scripture, said to be de-"termined or decreed (or exactly bounded and marked out "by God, as the word *Orizo* most naturally signifies) which he "sees in fact will happen, in consequence of his volitions, "without any necessitating agency; as well as those events, "of which he is properly the Author." Dodd. in Loc.

Thus it is certain and demonſtable, from the holy Scriptures, as well as the nature of things, and the principles of *Arminians*, that God permits Sin; and at the ſame time, ſo orders things, in his Providence, that it certainly and infallibly will come to paſs, in conſequence of his permiſſion.

I proceed to obſerve in the next place,

III. That there is a great difference between God's being concerned thus, by his *permiſſion*, in an event and act, which, in the inherent ſubject and agent of it, is Sin, (though the event will certainly follow on his permiſſion) and his being concerned in it by *producing* it and exerting the act of Sin; or between his being the *Orderer* of its certain exiſtence, by *not hindering* it, under certain circumſtances, and his being the proper *Actor* or *Author* of it, by a *poſitive Agency* or *Efficiency*. And this, notwithſtanding what Dr. Whitby offers about a ſaying of philoſophers, that *cauſa deficiens, in rebus neceſſariis, ad cauſam per ſe efficientem reducenda eſt.* As there is a vaſt difference between the ſun's being the cauſe of the lightſomneſs and warmth of the atmoſphere, and brightneſs of gold and diamonds, by its preſence and poſitive influence; and its being the occaſion of darkneſs and froſt, in the night, by its motion, whereby it deſcends below the horizon. The motion of the ſun is the occaſion of the latter kind of events; but it is not the proper cauſe, efficient or producer of them; though they are neceſſarily conſequent on that motion, under ſuch circumſtances: no more is any action of the Divine Being the Cauſe of the Evil of men's Wills. If the ſun were the proper *cauſe* of cold and darkneſs, it would be the *fountain* of theſe things, as it is the fountain of light and heat: and then ſomething might be argued from the nature of cold and darkneſs, to a likeneſs of nature in the ſun; and it might be juſtly inferred, that the ſun itſelf is

dark and cold, and that his beams are black and frosty. But from its being the cauſe no otherwiſe than by its departure, no ſuch thing can be inferred, but the contrary; it may juſtly be argued, that the ſun is a bright and hot body, if cold and darkneſs are found to be the conſequence of its withdrawment; and the more conſtantly and neceſſarily theſe effects are connected with, and confined to its abſence, the more ſtrongly does it argue the ſun to be the fountain of light and heat. So, inaſmuch as Sin, is not the fruit of any poſitive agency or influence of the Moſt High, but, on the contrary, ariſes from the withholding of his action and energy, and, under certain circumſtances, neceſſarily follows on the want of his influence; this is no argument that he is ſinful, or his operation evil, or has any thing of the nature of evil; but, on the contrary, that He, and his Agency, are altogether good and holy, and that He is the fountain of all Holineſs. It would be ſtrange arguing, indeed, becauſe men never commit Sin, but only when God leaves them *to themſelves*, and neceſſarily Sin, when he does ſo, and therefore their Sin is not *from themſelves* but from God; and ſo, that God muſt be a ſinful Being; as ſtrange as it would be to argue, becauſe it is always dark when the ſun is gone, and never dark when the ſun is preſent, that therefore all darkneſs is from the ſun, and that his diſk and beams muſt needs be black.

IV. It properly belongs to the Supreme and Abſolute Governor of the univerſe, to order all important events within his dominion, by his wiſdom: but the events in the moral world are of the moſt important kind, ſuch as the moral actions of intelligent creatures, and their conſequences.

Theſe events will be ordered by ſomething. They will either be diſpoſed by wiſdom, or they will be

diſpoſed by chance; that is, they will be diſpoſed by blind and undeſigning cauſes, if that were poſſible, and could be called a diſpoſal. Is it not better, that the good and evil which happens in God's world, ſhould be ordered, regulated, bounded and determined by the good pleaſure of an infinitely wiſe Being, who perfectly comprehends within his underſtanding and conſtant view, the univerſality of things, in all their extent and duration, and ſees all the influence of every event, with reſpect to every individual thing and circumſtance, throughout the grand ſyſtem, and the whole of the eternal ſeries of conſequences; than to leave theſe things to fall out by chance, and to be determined by thoſe cauſes which have no underſtanding or aim? Doubtleſs, in theſe important events, there is a better and a worſe, as to the time, ſubject, place, manner and circumſtances of their coming to paſs, with regard to their influence on the ſtate and courſe of things. And if there be, it is certainly beſt that they ſhould be determined to that time, place, &c. which is beſt. And therefore it is in its own nature fit, that wiſdom, and not chance, ſhould order theſe things. So that it belongs to the Being, who is the poſſeſſor of infinite Wiſdom, and is the Creator and Owner of the whole ſyſtem of created exiſtences, and has the care of all; I ſay, it belongs to him, to take care of this matter; and he would not do what is proper for him, if he ſhould neglect it. And it is ſo far from being unholy in him, to undertake this affair, that it would rather have been unholy to neglect it; as it would have been a neglecting what fitly appertains to him; and ſo it would have been a very unfit and unſuitable neglect.

Therefore the ſovereignty of God doubtleſs extends to this matter: eſpecially conſidering, that if it ſhould be ſuppoſed to be otherwiſe, and God

should leave men's volitions, and all moral events, to the determination and disposition of blind unmeaning causes, or they should be left to happen perfectly without a cause; this would be no more consistent with liberty, in any notion of it, and particularly not in the *Arminian* notion of it, than if these events were subject to the disposal of Divine Providence, and the Will of man were determined by circumstances which are ordered and disposed by Divine wisdom; as appears by what has been already observed. But it is evident, that such a providential disposing and determining men's moral actions, though it infers a moral necessity of those actions, yet it does not in the least infringe the real liberty of mankind; the only liberty that common sense teaches to be necessary to moral agency, which, as has been demonstrated, is not inconsistent with such necessity.

On the whole. it is manifest, that God may be, in the manner which has been described, the Orderer and Disposer of that event, which, in the inherent subject and agent, is moral evil; and yet His so doing may be no moral evil. He may Will the disposal of such an event, and its coming to pass for good ends, and his Will not be an immoral or sinful Will, but a perfect holy Will. And he may actually, in his Providence, so dispose and permit things, that the event may be certainly and infallibly connected with such disposal and permission, and his act therein not be an immoral or unholy, but a perfectly holy act. Sin may be an evil thing, and yet that there should be such a disposal and permission, as that it should come to pass, may be a good thing. This is no contradiction, or inconsistence. Joseph's brethren's selling him into Egypt, consider it only as it was acted by them, and with respect to their views and aims which were evil,

was a very bad thing; but it was a good thing, as it was an event of God's ordering, and conſidered with reſpect to his views and aims which were good. Gen. l. 20. *As for you, ye thought Evil againſt me; but God meant it unto Good.* So the crucifixion of Chriſt, if we conſider only thoſe things which belong to the event as it proceeded from his murderers, and are comprehended within the compaſs of the affair conſidered as their act, their principles, diſpoſitions, views and aims; ſo it was one of the moſt henious things that ever was done; in many reſpects the moſt horrid of all acts: but conſider it, as it was willed and ordered of God, in the extent of his deſigns and views, it was the moſt admirable and glorious of all events; and God's willing the event was the moſt holy volition of God, that ever was made known to men; and God's act in ordering it, was a divine act, which, above all others, manifeſts the moral excellency of the Divine Being.

The conſideration of theſe things may help us to a ſufficient anſwer to the cavils of *Arminians*, concerning what has been ſuppoſed by many *Calviniſts*, of a diſtinction between a *ſecret* and *revealed* Will of God, and their diverſity one from the other; ſuppoſing that the *Calviniſts* herein aſcribe inconſiſtent Wills to the Moſt High: which is without any foundation. God's *ſecret* and *revealed* Will, or, in other words, his *diſpoſing* and *perceptive* Will, may be diverſe, and exerciſed in diſſimilar acts, the one in diſapproving and oppoſing, the other in willing and determining, without any inconſiſtence. Becauſe, although theſe diſſimilar exerciſes of the Divine Will may, in ſome reſpects, relate to the ſame things, yet, in ſtrictneſs, they have different and contrary objects, the one evil and the other good. Thus, for inſtance, the crucifixion of Chriſt was a thing contrary to the revealed or perceptive Will of

God, becauſe, as it was viewed and done by his malignant murderers, it was a thing infinitely contrary to the holy nature of God, and ſo neceſſarily contrary to the holy inclination of his heart revealed in his law. Yet this does not at all hinder but that the crucifixion of Chriſt, conſidered with all thoſe glorious conſequences, which were within the view of the Divine Omniſcience, might be indeed, and therefore might appear to God to be, a glorious event; and conſequently be agreeable to his Will, though this Will may be ſecret, *i. e.* not revealed in God's law. And thus conſidered, the crucifixion of Chriſt was not evil but good. If the ſecret exerciſes of God's Will were of a kind that is diſſimilar, and contrary to his revealed Will, reſpecting the ſame, or like objects; if the objects of both were good, or both evil; then, indeed, to aſcribe contrary kinds of volition or inclination to God, reſpecting theſe objects, would be to aſcribe an inconſiſtent Will to God; but to aſcribe to him different and oppoſite exerciſes of heart, reſpecting different objects, and objects contrary one to another, is ſo far from ſuppoſing God's Will to be *inconſiſtent* with itſelf, that it cannot be ſuppoſed *conſiſtent* with itſelf any other way. For any being to have a Will of choice reſpecting good, and at the ſame time, a Will of rejection and refuſal reſpecting evil, is to be very conſiſtent: but the contrary, *viz.* to have the ſame Will towards theſe contrary objects, and to chooſe and love both good and evil, at the ſame time, is to be very inconſiſtent.

There is no inconſiſtence in ſuppoſing, that God may hate a thing as it is in itſelf, and conſidered ſimply as evil, and yet that it may be his Will it ſhould come to paſs, conſidering all conſequences. I believe, there is no perſon of good underſtanding, who will venture to ſay, he is certain that it is im-

poſſible it ſhould be beſt, taking in the whole compaſs and extent of exiſtence, and all conſequences in the endleſs ſeries of events, that there ſhould be ſuch a thing as moral evil in the world.* And, if

* Here are worthy to be obſerved ſome paſſages of a late noted writer, of our nation, that nobody who is acquainted with him, will ſuſpect to be very favourable to *Calviniſm*. 'It is difficult (ſays he) to handle the *neceſſity of evil* in ſuch 'a manner, as not to ſtumble ſuch as are not above being 'alarmed at propoſitions which have an uncommon ſound. 'But if philoſophers will but reflect calmly on the matter, 'they will find, that conſiſtently with the unlimitted power 'of the Supreme Cauſe, it may be ſaid, that in the beſt or-'dered ſyſtem, *evils* muſt have place.'—Turnbull's PRINCIPLES *of moral Philoſophy*, p. 327, 328. He is there ſpeaking of *moral* evils, as may be ſeen.

Again the ſame Author, in his *ſecond vol.* entitled *Chriſtian Philoſophy*, p. 35, has theſe words: 'If the Author and 'Governor of all things be infinitely *perfect*, then whatever 'is, is *right*; of all poſſible ſyſtems he hath choſen the *beſt*: 'and conſequently, there is *no abſolute evil* in the univerſe.—'This being the caſe, all the ſeeming *imperfections* or *evils* in 'it are ſuch only in a *partial* view; and with reſpect to the '*whole* ſyſtem, they are *goods*.'

Ibid, p. 37. '*Whence then comes evil?* is the queſtion that 'hath, in all ages, been reckoned the *Gordian* knot in philoſ-'ophy. And, indeed, if we own the exiſtence of evil in the 'world in an *abſolute* ſenſe, we diametrically contradict what 'hath been juſt now proved of God. For if there be any '*evil* in the ſyſtem, that is not good in reſpect to the *whole* 'then is the *whole* not good, but evil: or, at beſt, very im-'perfect; and an *Author* muſt be as his *workmanſhip* is; as 'is the effect, ſuch is the cauſe. But the ſolution of this 'difficulty is at hand; *That there is no evil in the univerſe*. 'What! Are there no pains, no imperfections? Is there no 'miſery, no vice in the world? or are not theſe *evils?* Evils 'indeed they are; that is, thoſe of one ſort are hurtful, and 'thoſe of the other ſort are equally hurtful, and abominable: 'but they are *not* evil or miſchievous with reſpect to the '*whole*.'

Ibid, p. 42. 'But He is, at the ſame time, ſaid to *create* 'evil, darkneſs, confuſion; and yet to do no evil, but to be 'the Author of good only. He is called the *Father of lights*,

ſo, it will certainly follow, that an infinitely wiſe Being, who always chooſes what is beſt, muſt chooſe that there ſhould be ſuch a thing. And, if ſo, then ſuch a choice is not an evil, but a wiſe and holy choice. And if ſo, then that Providence which is agreeable to ſuch a choice, is a wiſe and holy Providence. Men do *will* ſin as ſin, and ſo are the authors and actors of it: they love it as ſin, and for evil ends and purpoſes. God does not will ſin as ſin, or for the ſake of any thing evil; though it be his pleaſure ſo to order things, that He permitting, ſin will come to paſs; for the ſake of the great good that by his diſpoſal ſhall be the conſequence. His willing to order things ſo that evil ſhould come to paſs, for the ſake of the contrary good, is no argument that He does not hate evil, as evil: and if ſo, then it is no reaſon why he may not reaſonably forbid evil, as evil, and puniſh it as ſuch.

The *Arminians* themſelves muſt be obliged, whether they will or no, to allow a diſtinction of God's Will, amounting to juſt the ſame thing that *Calviniſts* intend by their diſtinction of a *ſecret and revealed Will.* They muſt allow a diſtinction of thoſe things which God thinks beſt ſhould be, conſidering all circumſtances and conſequences, and ſo are agreeable to his diſpoſing Will, and thoſe things

' the Author of *every perfect and good gift, with whom there* ' *is no variableneſs nor ſhadow of turning*, who *tempteth no* ' *man*, but *giveth to all men liberally, and upbraideth not.* And ' yet by the prophet Iſaias, He is introduced ſaying of Him- ' ſelf, *I form light, and create darkneſs; I make peace, and* ' *create evil: I the Lord, do all theſe things.* What is the ' meaning, the plain language of all this, but that the Lord ' delighteth in goodneſs, and (as the Scripture ſpeaks) evil ' is *his ſtrange work?* He intends and purſues the univerſal ' *good* of his creation: and the *evil* which happens, is not ' permitted for its own ſake, or through any pleaſure in evil, ' but becauſe it is requiſite to the *greater good* purſued.'

which he loves, and are agreeable to his nature, in themſelves conſidered. Who is there that will dare to ſay, that the helliſh pride, malice and cruelty of devils, are agreeable to God, and what He likes and approves? and yet, I truſt, there is no chriſtian divine but what will allow, that it is agreeable to God's Will ſo to order and diſpoſe things concerning them, ſo to leave them to themſelves, and give them up to their own wickedneſs, that this perfect wickedneſs ſhould be a neceſſary conſequence. Beſure Dr. Whitby's words do plainly ſuppoſe and allow it.*

The following things may be laid down as maxims of plain truth, and indiſputable evidence.

1. That God is a *perfectly happy* Being, in the moſt abſolute and higheſt ſenſe poſſible.

2. That it will follow from hence, that God is free from every thing that is *contrary to happineſs*; and ſo, that in ſtrict propriety of ſpeech, there is no ſuch thing as any pain, grief, or trouble, in God.

3. When any intelligent being is really croſſed and diſappointed, and things are contrary to what he truly deſires, he is the *leſs pleaſed* or has *leſs pleaſure*, his *pleaſure and happineſs is diminiſhed*, and he ſuffers what is diſagreeable to him, or is the ſubject of ſomething that is of a nature contrary to joy and happineſs, even pain and grief.†

From this laſt axiom, it follows, that if no diſtinction is to be admitted between God's hatred of ſin, and his Will with reſpect to the event and the

* Whitby on the five Points, Edit. 2. p. 300, 305, 309.

† Certainly it is not leſs abſurd and unreaſonable, to talk of God's Will and Deſires being truly and properly croſſed, without his ſuffering any uneaſineſs, or any thing grievous or diſagreeable, than it is to talk of ſomething that may be called a *revealed Will*, which may, in ſome reſpect, be different from a *ſecret* purpoſe; which purpoſe may be fulfilled, when the other is oppoſed.

exiſtence of ſin, as the all-wiſe Determiner of all events, under the view of all conſequences through the whole compaſs and ſeries of things; I ſay, then it certainly follows, that the coming to paſs of every individual act of ſin is truly, all things conſidered, contrary to his Will, and that his Will is really croſſed in it; and this in proportion as He hates it. And as God's hatred of ſin is infinite, by reaſon of the infinite contrariety of his Holy Nature to ſin; ſo his Will is infinitely croſſed, in every act of ſin that happens. Which is as much as to ſay, He endures that which is infinitely diſagreeable to him, by means of every act of ſin that He ſees committed. And, therefore, as appears by the preceding poſitions, He endures truly and really, infinite grief or pain from every ſin. And ſo He muſt be infinitely croſſed, and ſuffer infinite pain, every day, in millions of millions of inſtances: He muſt continually be the ſubject of an immenſe number of *real*, and truly infinitely *great* croſſes and vexations. Which would be to make him infinitely the moſt miſerable of all Beings.

If any objector ſhould ſay; all that theſe things amount to, is, that *God may do evil that good may come;* which is juſtly eſteemed immoral and ſinful in men; and therefore may be juſtly eſteemed inconſiſtent with the moral perfections of God. I anſwer, that for God to diſpoſe and permit evil, in the manner that has been ſpoken of, is not to do evil that good may come; for it is not to do evil at all.—In order to a thing's being morally evil, there muſt be one of theſe things belonging to it: either it muſt be a thing *unfit* and *unſuitable* in its own nature; or it muſt have a *bad tendency;* or it muſt proceed from an *evil diſpoſition*, and be done for an evil end. But neither of theſe things can be attributed to God's ordering and permitting ſuch

events, as the immoral acts of creatures, for good ends. (1.) It is not *unfit in its own nature*, that He should do so. For it is in its own nature *fit*, that *infinite wisdom*, and not blind chance, should dispose moral good and evil in the world. And it is *fit*, that the Being who has *infinite wisdom*, and is the Maker, Owner, and Supreme Governor of the world, should take care of that matter. And, therefore, there is no *unfitness*, or unsuitableness in his doing it. It may be unfit, and so immoral, for any other beings to go about to order this affair; because they are not possessed of a wisdom, that in any manner fits them for it; and, in other respects, they are not fit to be trusted with this affair; nor does it belong to them, they not being the owners and lords of the universe.

We need not be afraid to affirm, that if a wise and good man knew with absolute certainty, it would be best, all things considered, that there should be such a thing as moral evil in the world, it would not be contrary to his wisdom and goodness, for him to choose that it should be so. It is no evil desire, to desire good, and to desire that which, all things considered, is best. And it is no unwise choice, to choose that that should be, which it is best should be; and to choose the existence of that thing concerning which this is known, *viz.* that it is best it should be, and so is known in the whole to be most worthy to be chosen. On the contrary, it would be a plain defect in wisdom and goodness, for him not to choose it. And the reason why he might not *order* it, if he were able, would not be because he might not desire it, but only the ordering of that matter does not belong to him. But it is no harm for Him who is, by right, and in the greatest propriety, the Supreme Orderer of all things, to order every thing in such a manner, as it would be a

point of wisdom in Him to choose that they should be ordered. If it would be a plain defect of wisdom and goodness in a Being, not to choose that that should be, which He certainly knows it would, all things considered, be best should be (as was but now observed) then it must be impossible for a Being who has no defect of wisdom and goodness, to do otherwise than choose it should be; and that, for this very reason, because He is perfectly wise and good. And if it be agreeable to perfect wisdom and goodness for him to choose that it should be, and the ordering of all things supremely and perfectly belongs to him, it must be agreeable to infinite wisdom and goodness, to order that it should be. If the choice is good, the ordering and disposing things according to that choice must also be good. It can be no harm in one to whom it belongs *to do his Will in the armies of heaven, and amongst the inhabitants of the earth*, to execute a good volition. If this Will be good, and the object of his Will be, all things considered, good and best, then the choosing or willing it is not *willing evil* that good may come. And if so, then his ordering, according to that Will, is not *doing evil*, that good may come.

2. It is not of a *bad tendency*, for the Supreme Being thus to order and permit that moral evil to be, which it is best should come to pass. For that it is of good tendency, is the very thing supposed in the point now in question.—Christ's crucifixion, though a most horrid fact in them that perpetrated it, was of most glorious tendency as permitted and ordered of God.

3. Nor is there any need of supposing it *proceeds from any evil disposition or aim:* for by the supposition, what is aimed at is good, and good is the actual issue, in the final result of things.

Section X.

Concerning Sin's firſt Entrance *into the World.*

The things, which have already been offered, may ſerve to obviate or clear many of the objections which might be raiſed concerning Sin's firſt coming into the world; as though it would follow from the doctrine maintained, that God muſt be the Author of the firſt Sin, through his ſo diſpoſing things, that it ſhould neceſſarily follow from his permiſſion, that the ſinful act ſhould be committed, &c. I need not, therefore, ſtand to repeat what has been ſaid already, about ſuch a neceſſity's not proving God to be the Author of Sin, in any ill ſenſe, or in any ſuch ſenſe as to infringe any liberty of man, concerned in his moral agency, or capacity of blame, guilt and puniſhment.

But, if it ſhould nevertheleſs be ſaid, ſuppoſing the caſe ſo, that God, when he had made man, might ſo order his circumſtances, that from theſe circumſtances, together with his withholding further aſſiſtance and Divine Influence, his Sin would infallibly follow, why might not God as well have firſt made man with a fixed prevailing principle of Sin in his heart?

I anſwer, 1. It was meet, if Sin did come into exiſtence, and appear in the world, it ſhould ariſe from the imperfection which properly belongs to a creature, as ſuch, and ſhould appear ſo to do, that it might appear not to be from God as the efficient or fountain. But this could not have been, if man had been made at firſt with Sin in his heart; nor unleſs the abiding principle and habit of Sin were firſt introduced by an evil act of the creature. If Sin had not aroſe from the imperfection of the crea-

ture, it would not have been so visible, that it did not arise from God, as the positive cause, and real source of it.—But it would require room that cannot be here allowed, fully to consider all the difficulties which have been started, concerning the first Entrance of Sin into the world.

And therefore,

2. I would observe, that objections against the doctrine that has been laid down, in opposition to the *Arminian* notion of liberty, from these difficulties, are altogether impertinent; because no additional difficulty is incurred, by adhering to a scheme in this manner differing from theirs, and none would be removed or avoided, by agreeing with, and maintaining theirs. Nothing that the *Arminians* say, about the contingence, or self-determining power of man's will, can serve to explain, with less difficulty, how the first sinful volition of mankind could take place, and man be justly charged with the blame of it. To say, the Will was self-determined, or determined by free choice, in that sinful volition; which is to say, that the first sinful volition was determined by a foregoing sinful volition; is no solution of the difficulty. It is an odd way of solving difficulties, to advance greater, in order to it. To say, two and two makes nine; or, that a child begat his father, solves no difficulty: no more does it, to say, the first sinful act of choice was before the first sinful act of choice, and chose and determined it, and brought it to pass. Nor is it any better solution, to say, the first sinful volition chose, determined and produced itself; which is to say, it was before it was. Nor will it go any further towards helping us over the difficulty to say, the first sinful volition arose accidentally, without any cause at all; any more than it will solve that difficult question, *How the world could be made out of nothing?* to say, it came into being out

of nothing, without any cauſe; as has been already obſerved. And if we ſhould allow that *that* could be, that the firſt evil volition ſhould ariſe by perfect accident, without any cauſe; it would relieve no difficulty, about God's laying the blame of it to man. For how was man to blame for perfect accident, which had no cauſe, and which, therefore, he (to be ſure) was not the cauſe of, any more than if it came by ſome external cauſe?—Such kind of ſolutions are no better, than if ſome perſon, going about to ſolve ſome of the ſtrange mathematical paradoxes, about infinitely great and ſmall quantities; as, that ſome infinitely great quantities are infinitely greater than ſome other infinitely great quantities; and alſo that ſome infinitely ſmall quantities, are infinitely leſs than others, which yet are infinitely little; in order to a ſolution, ſhould ſay, that mankind have been under a miſtake, in ſuppoſing a greater quantity to exceed a ſmaller; and that a hundred, multiplied by ten, makes but a ſingle unit.

Section XI.

Of a ſuppoſed Inconſiſtence of theſe Principles with GOD's moral Character.

The things which have been already obſerved, may be ſufficient to anſwer moſt of the objections, and ſilence the great exclamations of *Arminians* againſt the *Calviniſts*, from the ſuppoſed inconſiſtence of *Calviniſtic* principles with the moral perfections of God, as exerciſed in his government of mankind. The conſiſtence of ſuch a doctrine of neceſſity as has been maintained, with the fitneſs and reaſonableneſs of God's commands, promiſes and threatenings, rewards

and punishments, has been particularly considered: the cavils of our opponents, as though our doctrine of necessity made God the author of sin, have been answered; and also their objection against these principles, as inconsistent with God's sincerity, in his counsels, invitations and persuasions, has been already obviated, in what has been observed, respecting the consistence of what *Calvinists* suppose, concerning the secret and revealed Will of God; by that it appears, there is no repugnance in supposing it may be the secret Will of God, that his ordination and permission of events should be such, that it shall be a certain consequence, that a thing never will come to pass; which yet it is man's duty to do, and so God's perceptive Will that he should do; and this is the same thing as to say, God may sincerely command and require him to do it. And if he may be sincere in commanding him, he may, for the same reason, be sincere in counselling, inviting and using persuasions with him to do it. Counsels and invitations are manifestations of God's perceptive Will, or of what God loves and what is in itself, and as man's act, agreeable to his heart; and not of his disposing Will, and what he chooses as a part of his own infinite scheme of things. It has been particularly shewn, Part III. Sect. IV. that such a necessity as has been maintained, is not inconsistent with the propriety and fitness of divine commands; and for the same reason, not inconsistent with the sincerity and invitations and counsels, in the Corollary at the end of the Section. Yea, it hath been shewn, Part III. Sect. VII. Corol. 1, that this objection of *Arminians*, concerning the sincerity and use of divine exhortations, invitations and counsels, is demonstrably against themselves.

Notwithstanding, I would further observe, that the difficulty of reconciling the sincerity of counsels, in-

vitations and perſuaſions with ſuch an antecedent known fixedneſs of all events, as has been ſuppoſed, is not peculiar to this ſcheme, as diſtinguiſhed from that of the generality of *Arminians*, which acknowledge the abſolute foreknowledge of God: and therefore, it would be unreaſonably brought as an objection againſt my differing from them. The main ſeeming difficulty in the caſe is this: that God, in counſelling, inviting and perſuading, makes a ſhew of aiming at, ſeeking and uſing endeavours for the thing exhorted and perſuaded to; whereas, it is impoſſible for any intelligent being truly to ſeek, or uſe endeavours for a thing, which he at the ſame time knows, moſt perfectly, will not come to paſs; and that it is abſurd to ſuppoſe, he makes the obtaining of a thing his end, in his calls and counſels, which he, at the ſame time, infallibly knows will not be obtained by theſe means. Now, if God knows this, in the utmoſt certainty and perfection, the way by which he comes by this knowledge makes no difference. If he knows it is by the neceſſity which he ſees in things, or by ſome other means; it alters not the caſe. But it is in effect allowed by *Arminians* themſelves, that God's inviting and perſuading men to do things, which he at the ſame time, certainly knows will not be done, is no evidence of inſincerity; becauſe they allow, that God has a certain foreknowledge of all men's ſinful actions and omiſſions. And as this is thus implicitly allowed by moſt *Arminians*, ſo all that pretends to own the Scriptures to be the word of God, muſt be conſtrained to allow it.—God commanded and counſelled Pharaoh to let his people go, and uſed arguments and perſuaſions to induce him to it; he laid before him arguments taken from his infinite Greatneſs and almighty Power, (Exod vii. 16,) and forewarned him of the fatal conſequences of his refuſal, from time to time; (chap.

viii. 1, 2, 20, 21. chap. ix. 1,—5, 13,—17, and x. 3, 6,) He commanded Moſes, and the elders of Iſreal, to go and beſeech Pharaoh to let the people go; and at the ſame time told them, he knew ſurely that he would not comply to it. Exod. iii. 18, 19. *And thou ſhalt come, thou and the elders of Iſrael, unto the king of Egypt, and you ſhall ſay unto him; the Lord God of the Hebrews hath met with us; and now let us go, we beſeech thee, three days journey into the wilderneſs, that we may ſacrifice unto the Lord our God: and, I am ſure, that the king of Egypt will not let you go.* So our bleſſed Saviour, the evening wherein he was betrayed, knew that Peter would ſhamefully deny him, before the morning; for he declares it to him with aſſeverations, to ſhew the certainty of it; and tells the diſciples, that all of them ſhould be offended becauſe of him that night; Matthew xxvi. 31—35. John xiii. 38. Luke xxii. 31—34. John xvi. 32. And yet it was their duty to avoid theſe things: they were very ſinful things, which God had forbidden, and which it was their duty to watch and pray againſt; and they were obliged to do ſo from the *counſels* and *perſuaſions* Chriſt uſed with them, at that very time, ſo to do; Matthew xxvi. 41. *Watch and pray, that ye enter not into temptation.* So that whatever difficulty there can be in this matter, it can be no objection againſt any principles which have been maintained in oppoſition to the principles of *Arminians;* nor does it any more concern me to remove the difficulty, than it does them, or indeed all, that call themſelves Chriſtians, and acknowledge the divine authority of the Scriptures.—Nevertheleſs, this matter may poſſibly (God allowing) be more particularly and largely conſidered, in ſome future diſcourſe, on the doctrine of *predeſtination.*

But I would here obſerve, that however the defenders of that notion of liberty of Will, which I have op-

poſed, exclaim againſt the doctrine of *Calviniſts*, as tending to bring men into doubts concerning the moral perfections of God; it is their ſcheme, and not the ſcheme of *Calviniſts*, that indeed is juſtly chargeable with this. For it is one of the moſt fundamental points of their ſcheme of things, that a freedom of Will, conſiſting in ſelf-determination, without all neceſſity, is eſſential to *moral agency*. This is the ſame thing as to ſay, that ſuch a determination of the Will, without all neceſſity, muſt be in all intelligent beings, in thoſe things, wherein they are *moral agents*, or in their *moral acts*: and from this it will follow, that God's Will is not neceſſarily determined, in any thing he does, as a *moral agent*, or in any of his *acts* that are of a *moral nature*: So that in all things, wherein he acts *holily*, *juſtly* and *truly*, he does not act neceſſarily; or his Will is not neceſſarily determined, to act holily and juſtly; becauſe, if it were neceſſarily determined, he would not be a *moral agent* in thus acting: his Will would be attended with neceſſity; which, they ſay, is inconſiſtent with *moral agency*: "He can act no otherwiſe: He is at no liberty in the "affair: He is determined by unavoidable invinci- "ble neceſſity: therefore ſuch agency is no moral "agency; yea, no agency at all, properly ſpeaking: "A neceſſary agent is no agent: He being paſſive, "and ſubject to neceſſity, what he does is no act of "his, but an effect of a neceſſity prior to any act of "his." This is agreeable to their manner of arguing. Now then, what is become of all our proof of the moral perfections of God? How can we prove, that God certainly will, in any one inſtance, do that which is juſt and holy; ſeeing his Will is determined in the matter by no neceſſity? We have no other way of proving that any thing *certainly* will be, but only by the neceſſity of the event. Where we can ſee no neceſſity but that the thing may be, or may not be, there

we are unavoidably left at a loss. We have no other way properly and truly to demonstrate the moral perfections of God, but the way that Mr. Chubb proves them in p. 252, 261, 262, 263, of his Tracts, *viz.* that God must necessarily perfectly know, what is most worthy and valuable in itself, which, in the nature of things, is best and fittest to be done. And, as this is most eligible in itself, He, being omniscient, must see it to be so; and being both omniscient and self-sufficient, cannot have any temptation to reject it; and so must necessarily Will that which is best. And thus, by this necessity of the determination of God's Will to what is good and best, we demonstrably establish God's moral character.

Corol. From things which have been observed, it appears, that most of the arguments from Scripture, which *Arminians* make use of to support their scheme, are no other than *begging the question*. For in these their arguments, they determine in the first place, that without such a freedom of Will as they hold, men cannot be proper moral agents, nor the subjects of command, counsel, persuasion, invitation, promises, threatenings, expostulations, rewards and punishments; and that without such freedom it is to no purpose for men to take any care, or use any diligence, endeavours or means, in order to their avoiding sin, or becoming holy, escaping punishment or obtaining happiness: and having supposed these things, which are grand things in question in the debate, then they heap up Scriptures, containing commands, counsels, calls, warnings, persuasions, expostulations, promises, and threatenings; (as doubtless they may find enough such; the Bible is confessedly full of them, from the beginning to the end) and then they glory, how full the Scripture is on their side, how many more texts there are that evidently favour their scheme, than such as seem to favour the con-

trary. But let them firſt make manifeſt the things in queſtion, which they ſuppoſe and take for granted, and ſhew them to be conſiſtent with themſelves; and produce clear evidence of their truth; and they have gained their point, as all will confeſs, without bringing one Scripture. For none denies, that there are commands, counſels, promiſes, threatenings, &c. in the Bible. But unleſs they do theſe things, their multiplying ſuch texts of Scripture is inſignificant and vain.

It may further be obſerved, that ſuch Scriptures, as they bring, are really againſt them, and not for them. As it has been demonſtrated, that it is their ſcheme, and not ours, that is inconſiſtent with the uſe of motives and perſuaſives, or any moral means whatſoever, to induce men to the practice of virtue, or abſtaining from wickedneſs: their principles, and not ours, are repugnant to moral agency, and inconſiſtent with moral government, with law or precept, with the nature of virtue or vice, reward or puniſhment, and with every thing whatſoever of a moral nature, either on the part of the moral governor, or in the ſtate, actions or conduct of the ſubject.

Section XII.

Of a ſuppoſed Tendency of theſe Principles to Atheiſm *and* Licentiouſneſs.

If any object againſt what has been maintained, that it tends to *Atheiſm;* I know not on what grounds ſuch an objection can be raiſed, unleſs it be, that ſome Atheiſts have held a doctrine of neceſſity which they ſuppoſe to be like this. But if it be ſo, I am perſuaded the *Arminians* would not look upon it juſt,

that their notion of freedom and contingence should be charged with a tendency to all the errors that ever any embraced, who have held such opinions.—The *Stoic* philosophers, whom the *Calvinists* are charged with agreeing with, were no Atheists, but the greatest Theists and nearest a-kin to Christians in their opinions concerning the unity and the perfections of the Godhead, of all the heathen philosophers. And Epicurus, that chief father of Atheism, maintained no such doctrine of necessity, but was the greatest maintainer of contingence.

The doctrine of necessity, which supposes a necessary connexion of all events, on some antecedent ground and reason of their existence, is the only medium we have to prove the being of God. And the contrary doctrine of contingence, even as maintained by *Arminians* (which certainly implies or infers, that events may come into existence, or begin to be, without dependence on any thing foregoing, as their cause, ground or reason) takes away all proof of the being of God; which proof is summarily expressed by the apostle, in Rom. i. 20. And this is a tendency to *Atheism* with a witness. So that, indeed, it is the doctrine of *Arminians*, and not of the *Calvinists*, that is justly charged with a tendency to *Atheism*; it being built on a foundation that is the utter subversion of every demonstrative argument for the proof of a Deity; as has been shown, Part II. Sec. III.

And whereas it has often been said, that the *Calvinistic* doctrine of necessity saps the foundations of all religion and virtue, and tends to the greatest Licentiousness of practice: this objection is built on the pretence, that our doctrine renders vain all means and endeavours, in order to be virtuous and religious. Which pretence has been already particularly considered in the 5th *Section* of this *Part*; where it has been demonstrated, that this doctrine has no

ſuch tendency; but that ſuch a tendency is truly to be charged on the contrary doctine: inaſmuch as the notion of contingence, which their doctrine implies, in its certain conſequences, overthrows all connexion in every degree, between endeavour and event, means and end.

And beſides, if many other things, which have been obſerved to belong to the *Arminian* doctrine, or to be plain conſequences of it, be conſidered, there will appear juſt reaſon to ſuppoſe that, it is *that* which muſt rather tend to Licentiouſneſs. Their doctrine excuſes all evil inclinations, which men find to be natural; becauſe in ſuch inclinations, they are not ſelf-determined, as ſuch inclinations are not owing to any choice or determination of their own Wills. Which leads men wholly to juſtify themſelves in all their wicked actions, ſo far as natural inclination has had a hand in determining their Wills, to the commiſſion of them. Yea, theſe notions, which ſuppoſe moral neceſſity and inability to be inconſiſtent with blame or moral obligation, will directly lead men to juſtify the vileſt acts and practiſes, from the ſtrength of their wicked inclinations of all ſorts; ſtrong inclinations inducing a moral neceſſity; yea, to excuſe every degree of evil inclination, ſo far as this has evidently prevailed, and been the thing which has determined their Wills: becauſe, ſo far as antecedent inclination determined the Will, ſo far the Will was without liberty of indifference and ſelf-determination. Which, at laſt, will come to this, that men will juſtify themſelves in all the wickedneſs they commit. It has been obſerved already, that this ſcheme of things does exceedingly diminiſh the guilt of ſin, and the difference between the greateſt and ſmalleſt offences;* and if it be purſued in its real conſequences,

* Part III. Sect. VI.

it leaves room for no such thing, as either virtue or vice, blame or praise in the world. * And then again, how naturally does this notion of the sovereign self-determining power of the Will, in all things, virtuous or vicious, and whatsoever deserves either reward or punishment, tend to encourage men to put off the work of religion and virtue, and turning from sin to God; it being that which they have a sovereign power to determine themselves to, just when they please; or if not, they are wholly excusable in going on in sin, because of their inability to do any other.

If it should be said, that the tendency of this doctrine of necessity, to Licentiousness, appears by the improvement many at this day actually make of it, to justify themselves in their dissolute courses; I will not deny that some men do unreasonably abuse this doctrine, as they do many other things, which are true and excellent in their own nature: but I deny that this proves, the doctrine itself has any tendency to Licentiousness. I think, the tendency of doctrines, by what now appears in the world, and in our nation in particular, may much more justly be argued, from the general effect which has been seen to attend the prevailing of the principles of *Arminians*, and the contrary principles; as both have had their turn of general prevalence in our nation. If it be indeed, as is pretended, that *Calvinistic* doctrines undermine the very foundation of all religion and morality, and enervate and disannul all rational motives to holy and virtuous practice; and that the contrary doctrines give the inducements to virtue and goodness their proper force, and exhibit religion in a rational light, tending to recommend it to the reason of mankind, and enforce it in a manner that is agreeable to their natural notions of things: I say, if it be thus,

* Part III. Sect. VI. Ibid. Sect. VII. Part IV. Sect. I. Part III. Sect. III. *Corol.* 1, after the first Head.

it is remarkable, that virtue and religious practice ſhould prevail moſt, when the former doctrines, ſo inconſiſtent with it, prevailed almoſt univerſally: and that ever ſince the latter doctrines, ſo happily agreeing with it, and of ſo proper and excellent a tendency to promote it, have been gradually prevailing, vice, prophaneneſs, luxury and wickedneſs of all ſorts, and contempt of all religion, and of every kind of ſerioufneſs and ſtrictneſs of converſation, ſhould proportionably prevail; and that theſe things ſhould thus accompany one another, and riſe and prevail one with another, now for a whole age together. It is remarkable, that this happy remedy (diſcovered by the free enquiries, and ſuperior ſenſe and wiſdom of this age) againſt the pernicious effects of *Calviniſm*, ſo inconſiſtent with religion, and tending ſo much to baniſh all virtue from the earth, ſhould, on ſo long a trial, be attended with no good effect; but that the conſequence ſhould be the reverſe of amendment; that in proportion as the remedy takes place, and is thoroughly applied, ſo the diſeaſe ſhould prevail; and the very ſame diſmal effect take place, to the higheſt degree, which *Calviniſtic* doctrines are ſuppoſed to have ſo great a tendency to; even the baniſhing of religion and virtue, and the prevailing of unbounded Licentiouſneſs of manners. If theſe things are truly ſo, they are very remarkable, and matter of very curious ſpeculation.

Section XIII.

Concerning that Objection againſt the reaſoning, *by which the* Calviniſtic *doctrine is ſupported, that it is* metaphyſical *and* abſtruſe.

It has often been objected againſt the defenders of *Calviniſtic* principles, that in their reaſonings, they

run into nice ſcholaſtic diſtinctions, and abſtruſe metaphyſical ſubtilties, and ſet theſe in oppoſition to common ſenſe. And it is poſſible, that, after the former manner, it may be alledged againſt the reaſoning by which I have endeavoured to confute the *Arminian* ſcheme of liberty and moral agency, that it is very abſtracted and metaphyſical. Concerning this, I would obſerve the following things.

I. If that be made an objection againſt the foregoing Reaſoning, that it is *metaphyſical*, or may properly be reduced to the ſcience of *metaphyſics*, it is a very impertinent objection; whether it be ſo or no, is not worthy of any diſpute or controverſy. If the Reaſoning be good, it is as frivolous to enquire what ſcience it is properly reduced to, as what language it is delivered in: and for a man to go about to confute the arguments of his opponent, by telling him, his arguments are *metaphyſical*, would be as weak as to tell him, his arguments could not be ſubſtantial, becauſe they were written in *French* or *Latin*. The queſtion is not, whether what is ſaid to be metaphyſics, logic, or mathematics, *Latin*, *French*, *Engliſh* or *Mohawk?* But whether the Reaſoning be good, and the arguments truly concluſive? The foregoing arguments are no mor emetaphyſical, than thoſe which we uſe againſt the Papiſts, to diſprove their doctrine of tranſubſtantiation; alledging, it is inconſiſtent with the notion of corporeal identity, that it ſhould be in ten thouſand places at the ſame time. It is by metaphyſical arguments only we are able to prove, that the rational ſoul is not corporeal; that lead or ſand cannot think; that thoughts are not ſquare or round, or do not weigh a pound. The arguments by which we prove the being of God, if handled cloſely and diſtinctly, ſo as to ſhew their clear and demonſtrative evidence, muſt be metaphyſically treated. It is by metaphyſics only, that we can demonſtrate, that

God is not limited to a place, or is not mutable; that he is not ignorant or forgetful; that it is impoſſible for him to lie, or be unjuſt; and that there is one God only, and not hundreds or thouſands. (And, indeed, we have no ſtrict demonſtration of any thing, excepting mathematical truths, but by metaphyſics.) We can have no proof, that is properly demonſtrative, of any one propoſition, relating to the being and nature of God, his creation of the world, the dependence of all things on him, the nature of bodies or ſpirits, the nature of our own ſouls, or any of the great truths of morality and natural religion, but what is metaphyſical. I am willing my arguments ſhould be brought to the teſt of the ſtricteſt and juſteſt Reaſon, and that a clear, diſtinct and determinate meaning of the terms I uſe, ſhould be inſiſted on; but let not the whole be rejected, as if all were confuted, by fixing on it the epithet, *metaphyſical.*

II. If the reaſoning, which has been made uſe of, be in ſome ſenſe metaphyſical, it will not follow, that therefore it muſt needs be abſtruſe, unintelligible, and a-kin to the jargon of the ſchools. I humbly conceive, the foregoing reaſoning, at leaſt to thoſe things which are moſt material belonging to it, depends on no abſtruſe definitions or diſtinctions, or terms without a meaning, or of very ambiguous and undetermined ſignification, or any points of ſuch abſtraction and ſubtilty, as tends to involve the attentive underſtanding in clouds and darkneſs. (There is no high degree of refinement and abſtruſe ſpeculation, in determining, that a thing is not before it is, and ſo cannot be the cauſe of itſelf; or that the firſt act of free choice, has not another act of free choice going before that, to excite or direct it; or in determining, that no choice is made, while the mind remains in a ſtate of abſolute indifference; that preference and equilibrium never co-exiſt; and that there-

fore no choice is made in a ſtate of liberty, conſiſting in indifference: and that ſo far as the Will is determined by motives, exhibiting and operating previous to the act of the Will, ſo far it is not determined by the act of the Will itſelf; that nothing can begin to be, which before was not, without a cauſe, or ſome antecedent ground or reaſon, why it then begins to be; that effects depend on their cauſes, and are connected with them; that virtue is not the worſe, nor ſin the better, for the ſtrength of inclination with which it is practiſed, and the difficulty which thence ariſes of doing otherwiſe; that when it is already infallibly known, that the thing will be, it is not a thing contingent whether it will ever be or no; or that it can be truly ſaid, notwithſtanding, that it is not neceſſary it ſhould be, but it either may be, or may not be. And the like might be obſerved of many other things which belong to the foregoing Reaſoning.

If any ſhall ſtill ſtand to it, that the foregoing Reaſoning is nothing but metaphyſical ſophiſtry; and that it muſt be ſo, that the ſeeming force of the arguments all depends on ſome fallacy, and while that is hid in the obſcurity, which always attends a great degree of metaphyſical abſtraction and refinement; and ſhall be ready to ſay, "Here is indeed ſomething "that tends to confound the mind, but not to ſatis- "fy it: for who can ever be truly ſatisfied in it, that "men are fitly blamed or commended, puniſhed or "rewarded for thoſe volitions which are not from "themſelves, and of whoſe exiſtence they are not the "cauſes. Men may refine as much as they pleaſe, "and advance their abſtract notions, and make out "a thouſand ſeeming contradictions, to puzzle our "underſtandings; yet there can be no ſatisfaction in "ſuch doctrine as this: the natural ſenſe of the mind "of man will always reſiſt it."* I humbly conceive,

* A certain noted Author of the preſent age ſays, the arguments for *neceſſity* are nothing but *quibbling*, *or logomachy*,

that ſuch an objector, if he has capacity and humility and calmneſs of ſpirit, ſufficient impartiality, and thoroughly to examine himſelf, will find that he knows not really what he would be at; and indeed, his difficulty is nothing but a mere prejudice, from an inadvertent cuſtomary uſe of words, in a meaning that is not clearly underſtood, nor carefully reflected

uſing words without a meaning, or begging the queſtion. I do not know what kind of neceſſity any authors, he may have reference to, are advocates for; or whether they have managed their arguments well, or ill. As to the arguments I have made uſe of, if they are *quibbles* they may be ſhewn ſo: ſuch knots are capable of being untied, and the trick and cheat may be detected and plainly laid open. If this be fairly done, with reſpect to the grounds and reaſons I have relied upon, I ſhall have juſt occaſion, for the future, to be ſilent, if not to be aſhamed of my argumentations. I am willing my proofs ſhould be thoroughly examined; and if there be nothing but *begging the queſtion*, or mere *logomachy*, or diſpute of words, let it be made manifeſt, and ſhewn how the ſeeming ſtrength of the argument depends on my *uſing words without a meaning*, or ariſes from the ambiguity of terms, or my making uſe of words in an indeterminate and unſteady manner; and that the weight of my reaſons reſt mainly on ſuch a foundation: and then, I ſhall either be ready to retract what I have urged, and thank the man that has done the kind part, or ſhall be juſtly expoſed for my obſtinacy.

The ſame Author is abundant in appealing, in this affair, from what he calls *logomachy and ſophiſtry*, to *experience.* A perſon can experience only what paſſes in his own mind. But yet, as we may well ſuppoſe, that all men have the ſame human faculties; ſo a man may well argue from his own experience to that of others, in things that ſhew the nature of thoſe faculties, and the manner of their operation. But then one has as good right to alledge his experience, as another. As to my own experience, I find, that in innumerable things I can do as I will; that the motions of my body, in many reſpects, inſtantaneouſly follow the acts of my Will concerning thoſe motions; and that my Will has ſome command of my thoughts; and that the acts of my Will are my own, *i. e.* that they are acts of my Will, the volitions of my own mind; or, in other words, that what I will, I will. Which, I preſume,

upon. Let the objector reflect again, if he has candor and patience enough, and does not ſcorn to be at the trouble of cloſe attention in the affair. He would have a man's volition be *from himſelf*. Let it be *from himſelf*, moſt primarily and originally of any way conceivable; that is, from his own choice: how will that help the matter, as to his being juſtly blamed or praiſed, unleſs that choice itſelf be blame or praiſe-worthy? And how is the choice itſelf (an ill choice, for inſtance) blame-worthy, according to theſe principles, unleſs that be from himſelf too, in the ſame manner; that is, from his own choice? But the original and firſt determining choice in the affair is not from his choice: his choice is not the cauſe of it. And if it be from himſelf ſome other way, and not from his choice, ſurely that will not help the matter: If it be not from himſelf of choice, then it is not from himſelf voluntarily; and if ſo, he is ſurely no more to blame, than if it were not from himſelf at all. It

is the ſum of what others experience in this affair. But as to finding by experience, that my Will is originally determined by itſelf; or that, my Will firſt chooſing what volition there ſhall be, the choſen volition accordingly follows; and that this is the firſt riſe of the determination of my Will in any affair; or that any volition riſes in my mind contingently; I declare, I know nothing in myſelf, by experience, of this nature; and nothing that ever I experienced, carries the leaſt appearance or ſhadow of any ſuch thing, or gives me any more reaſon to ſuppoſe or ſuſpect any ſuch thing, than to ſuppoſe that my volitions exiſted twenty years before they exiſted. It is true, I find myſelf poſſeſſed of my volitions, before I can ſee the effectual power of any cauſe to produce them, (for the power and efficacy of the cauſe is not ſeen bu[illegible] the effect) and this, for ought I know, may make ſome imag[illegible], that volition has no cauſe, or that it produces itſelf. But I [illegible]e no more reaſon from hence to determine any ſuch thi[illegible] than I have to determine that I gave myſelf my own being, [illegible]r that I came into being accidentally without a cauſe, becauſe I firſt found myſelf poſſeſſed of being, before I had knowledge of a cauſe of my being.

is a vanity, to pretend it is a ſufficient anſwer to this, to ſay, that it is nothing but metaphyſical refinement and ſubtilty, and ſo attended with obſcurity and uncertainty.

If it be the natural ſenſe of our minds, that what is blame-worthy in a man muſt be from himſelf, then it doubtleſs is alſo, that it muſt be from ſomething *bad* in himſelf, a *bad choice*, or *bad diſpoſition*. But then our natural ſenſe is, that this bad choice or diſpoſition is evil *in itſelf*, and the man blame-worthy for it, *on its own account*, without taking into our notion of its blame-worthineſs, another bad choice, or diſpoſition going before this, from whence this ariſes: for that is a ridiculous abſurdity, running us into an immediate contradiction, which our natural ſenſe of blame-worthineſs has nothing to do with, and never comes into the mind, nor is ſuppoſed in the judgment we naturally make of the affair. As was demonſtrated before, natural ſenſe does not place the moral evil of volitions and diſpoſitions in the cauſe of them, but the nature of them. An evil thing's being FROM a man, or from ſomething antecedent in him, is not eſſential to the original notion we have of blame-worthineſs: but it is its being the choice of the heart; as appears by this, that if a thing be *from* us, and not from our choice, it has not the nature of blame-worthineſs or ill-deſert, according to our natural ſenſe. When a thing is *from* a man, in that ſenſe, that it is from his Will or choice, he is to blame for it, becauſe his Will is IN IT: ſo far as the Will is *in it*, blame is *in it*, and no further. Neither do we go any further in our notion of blame, to enquire whether the bad Will be FROM a bad Will: there is no conſideration of the original of that bad Will; becauſe, according to our natural apprehenſion, blame *originally conſiſts in it*. Therefore a thing's being *from* a man, is a ſecondary conſideration, in the notion of

blame or ill-desert. Because those things, in our *external* actions, are most properly said to be *from* us, which are *from* our choice; and no other *external* actions, but those that are from us in this sense, have the nature of blame; and they indeed, not so properly because they are *from us*, as because we are *in them*, i. e. our Wills are in them; not so much because they are from some *property* of ours, as because they are our *properties*.

However, all these external actions being truly *from us*, as their cause; and we being so used, in ordinary speech, and in the common affairs of life, to speak of men's actions and conduct that we see, and that affect human society, as deserving ill or well, as worthy of blame or praise; hence it is come to pass, that philosophers have incautiously taken all their measures of good and evil, praise and blame, from the dictates of common sense, about these *overt acts* of men; to the running of every thing into the most lamentable and dreadful confusion. And, therefore, I observe,

III. It is so far from being true (whatever may be pretended) that the proof of the doctrine which has been maintained, depends on certain abstruse, unintelligible, metaphysical terms and notions; and that the *Arminian* scheme, without needing such clouds and darkness for its defence, is supported by the plain dictates of common sense; that the very reverse is most certainly true, and that to a great degree. It is fact, that they, and not we, have confounded things with metaphysical, unintelligible notions and phrases, and have drawn them from the light of plain truth, into the gross darkness of abstruse metaphysical propositions, and words without a meaning. Their pretended demonstrations depend very much on such unintellible, metaphysical phrases, as, *self-determination*, and *sovereignty of the Will*;

and the metaphyſical ſenſe they put on ſuch terms, as *neceſſity*, *contingency*, *action*, *agency*, &c. quite diverſe from their meaning as uſed in common ſpeech; and which, as they uſe them, are without any conſiſtent meaning, or any manner of diſtinct conſiſtent ideas; as far from it as any of the abſtruſe terms and perplexed phraſes of the peripatetic philoſophers or the moſt unintelligible jargon of the ſchools, or the cant of the wildeſt fanatics. Yea, we may be bold to ſay, theſe metaphyſical terms, on which they build ſo much, are what they uſe without knowing what they mean themſelves; they are pure metaphyſical ſounds, without any ideas whatſoever in their minds to anſwer them; inaſmuch as it has been demonſtrated, that there cannot be any notion in the mind conſiſtent with theſe expreſſions, as they pretend to explain them; becauſe their explanations deſtroy themſelves. No ſuch notions as imply ſelf-contradiction, and ſelf-abolition, and this a great many ways, can ſubſiſt in the mind; as there can be no idea of a whole which is leſs than any of its parts, or of ſolid extenſion without dimenſions, or of an effect which is before its cauſe.—*Arminians* improve theſe terms, as terms of art, and in their metaphyſical meaning, to advance and eſtabliſh thoſe things which are contrary to common ſenſe, in a high degree. Thus, inſtead of the plain vulgar notion of liberty, which all mankind, in every part of the face of the earth, and in all ages, have; conſiſting in opportunity to do as one pleaſes; they have introduced a new ſtrange liberty, conſiſting in indifference, contingence, and ſelf-determination; by which they involve themſelves and others in great obſcurity, and manifold groſs inconſiſtence. So, inſtead of placing virtue and vice, as common ſenſe places them very much, in fixed bias and inclination, and greater virtue and vice in ſtronger and more eſtab-

liſhed inclination; theſe, through their refinings and abſtruſe notions, ſuppoſe a liberty conſiſting in indifference, to be eſſential to all virtue and vice. So they have reaſoned themſelves, not by metaphyſical diſtinctions, but metaphyſical confuſion, into many principles about moral agency, blame, praiſe, reward and puniſhment, which are, as has been ſhewn, exceeding contrary to the common ſenſe of mankind; and perhaps to their own ſenſe, which governs them in common life.

THE

CONCLUSION.

WHETHER the things which have been alledged, are liable to any tolerable anſwer in the ways of calm, intelligible and ſtrict reaſoning, I muſt leave others to judge: but I am ſenſible they are liable to one ſort of anſwer. It is not unlikely, that ſome, who value themſelves on the ſuppoſed rational and generous principles of the modern faſhionable divinity, will have their indignation and diſdain raiſed at the ſight of this diſcourſe, and on perceiving what things are pretended to be proved in it. And if they think it worthy of being read, or of ſo much notice as to ſay much about it, they may probably renew the uſual exclamations, with additional vehemence and contempt, about the *fate of the heathen*, Hobbes' *Neceſſity*, and *making men mere machines*; accumulating the terrible epithets of *fatal*, *unfruſtrable*, *inevitable*, *irreſiſtible*, &c. and it may be, with the addition of *horrid* and *blaſphemous*; and perhaps much ſkill may be uſed to ſet forth things, which have been ſaid, in colours which ſhall be ſhocking to the imaginations, and moving to the paſſions of thoſe, who have either too little capacity, or too much confidence of the opinions they have imbibed, and contempt of the contrary, to try the matter by any ſerious and circumſpect examination.* Or difficulties may be ſtarted

* A writer, of the preſent age, whom I have ſeveral times had occaſion to mention, ſpeaks once and again of thoſe who hold the doctrine of *Neceſſity*, as ſcarcely worthy the name of *philoſophers*.—I do not know, whether he has reſpect to any particular notion of neceſſity, that ſome may have maintained;

and insisted on, which do not belong to the controversy; because, let them be more or less real, and hard to be resolved they are not what are owing to any thing distinguishing of this scheme from that of the *Arminians*, and would not be removed nor diminished by renouncing the former, and adhering to the latter. Or some particular things may be picked out, which they may think will sound harshest in the ears of the generality; and these may be glossed and descanted on, with tart and contemptuous words; and from thence, the whole treated with triumph and insult.

It is easy to see, how the decision of most of the points in controversy, between *Calvinists* and *Arminians*, depends on the determination of this grand article concerning *the Freedom of the Will requisite to moral agency*; and that by clearing and establishing the *Calvinistic* doctrine in this point, the chief arguments are obviated, by which *Arminian* doctrines in general are supported, and the contrary doctrines demonstratively confirmed. Hereby it becomes manifest, that God's moral government over mankind, his treating them as moral agents, making them the objects of his commands, counsels, calls, warnings, expostulations, promises, threatenings, rewards and

and, if so, what doctrine of necessity it is that he means.—Whether I am worthy of the name of a philosopher, or not, would be a question little to the present purpose. If any, and ever so many, should deny it, I should not think it worth the while to enter into a dispute on that question: though at the same time I might expect, some better answer should be given to the arguments brought for the truth of the doctrine I maintain; and I might further reasonably desire, that it might be considered, whether it does not become those, who are *truly worthy* of the name of philosophers, to be sensible, that there is a difference between *argument* and *contempt*; yea, and a difference between the contemptibleness of the *person* that argues, and the inconclusiveness of the *arguments* he offers.

puniſhments, is not inconſiſtent with a *determining diſpoſal* of all events, of every kind, throughout the univerſe, *in his Providence;* either by poſitive efficiency, or permiſſion. Indeed, ſuch an *univerſal determining Providence*, infers ſome kind of neceſſity of all events, ſuch a neceſſity as implies an infallible previous fixedneſs of the futurity of the event: but no other neceſſity of moral events, or volitions of intelligent agents, is needful in order to this, than *moral neceſſity;* which does as much aſcertain the futurity of the event, as any other neceſſity. But, as has been demonſtrated, ſuch a neceſſity is not at all repugnant to moral agency, and a reaſonable uſe of commands, calls, rewards, puniſhments, &c. Yea, not only are objections of this kind againſt the doctrine of an univerſal *determining Providence*, removed by what has been ſaid; but the truth of ſuch a doctrine is demonſtrated. As it has been demonſtrated, that the futurity of all future events is eſtabliſhed by previous neceſſity, either natural or moral; ſo it is manifeſt, that the ſovereign Creator and Diſpoſer of the world has ordered this neceſſity, by ordering his own conduct, either in deſignedly acting, or forbearing to act. For, as the being of the world is from God, ſo the circumſtances in which it had its being at firſt, both negative and poſitive, muſt be ordered by him, in one of theſe ways; and all the neceſſary conſequences of theſe circumſtances, muſt be ordered by him. And God's active and poſitive interpoſitions, after the world was created, and the conſequences of theſe interpoſitions; alſo every inſtance of his forbearing to interpoſe, and the ſure conſequences of this forbearance, muſt all be determined according to his pleaſure. And therefore every event, which is the conſequence of any thing whatſoever, or that is connected with any foregoing thing or circumſtance, either poſitive or negative, as the ground

or reaſon of its exiſtence, muſt be ordered of God; either by a deſigning efficiency and interpoſition, or a deſigned forbearing to operate or interpoſe. But, as has been proved, all events whatſoever are neceſſarily connected with ſomething foregoing, either poſitive or negative, which is the ground of its exiſtence: It follows, therefore, that the whole ſeries of events is thus connected with ſomething in the ſtate of things, either poſitive or negative, which is *original* in the ſeries; *i. e.* ſomething which is connected with nothing preceding that, but God's own immediate conduct, either his acting or forbearing to act. From whence it follows, that as God deſignedly orders his own conduct, and its connected conſequences, it muſt neceſſarily be, that he deſignedly orders all things.

The things, which have been ſaid, obviate ſome of the chief objections of *Arminians* againſt the *Calviniſtic* doctrine of the *total depravity and corruption of man's nature*, whereby his heart is wholly under the power of ſin, and he is utterly unable, without the interpoſition of ſovereign grace, ſavingly to love God, believe in Chriſt, or do any thing that is truly good and acceptable in God's ſight. For the main objection againſt this doctrine is, that it is inconſiſtent with the freedom of man's Will, conſiſting in indifference and ſelf-determining power; becauſe it ſuppoſes man to be under a neceſſity of ſinning, and that God requires things of him, in order to his avoiding eternal damnation, which he is unable to do; and that this doctrine is wholly inconſiſtent with the ſincerity of counſels, invitations, &c. Now, this doctrine ſuppoſes *no other neceſſity* of ſinning, than a moral neceſſity; which, as has been ſhewn, does not at all excuſe ſin; and ſuppoſes *no other inability* to obey any command, or perform any duty, even the moſt ſpiritual and exalted, but a moral inability,

which, as has been proved, does not excuſe perſons in the non performance of any good thing, or make them not to be the proper objects of commands, counſels and invitations. And, moreover, it has been ſhewn, that there is not, and never can be, either in exiſtence, or ſo much as in idea, any ſuch freedom of Will, conſiſting in indifference and ſelf-determination, for the ſake of which, this doctrine of original ſin is caſt out; and that no ſuch freedom is neceſſary, in order to the nature of ſin, and a juſt deſert of puniſhment.

The things, which have been obſerved, do alſo take off the main objections of *Arminians* againſt the doctrine of *efficacious grace;* and at the ſame time, prove the grace of God in a ſinner's converſion (if there be any grace or divine influence in the affair) to be *efficacious*, yea, and *irreſiſtible* too, if by irreſiſtible is meant, that which is attended with a moral neceſſity, which it is impoſſible ſhould ever be violated by any reſiſtance. The main objection of *Arminians* againſt the doctrine is, that it is inconſiſtent with their ſelf-determining freedom of Will; and that it is repugnant to the nature of virtue, that it ſhould be wrought in the heart by the determining efficacy and power of another, inſtead of its being owing to a ſelf-moving power; that, in that caſe, the good which is wrought, would not be *our* virtue, but rather God's virtue; becauſe it is not the perſon in whom it is wrought, that is the determining author of it, but God that wrought it in him. But the things, which are the foundation of theſe objections, have been conſidered; and it has been demonſtrated, that the liberty of moral agents does not conſiſt in ſelf-determining power; and that there is no need of any ſuch liberty, in order to the nature of virtue; nor does it at all hinder, but that the ſtate or act of the Will may be the virtue of the ſubject, though it be

not from ſelf-determination, but the determination of an intrinſic cauſe; even ſo as to cauſe the event to be morally neceſſary to the ſubject of it. And as it has been proved, that nothing in the ſtate or acts of the Will of man is contingent; but that, on the contrary, every event of this kind is neceſſary, by a moral neceſſity; and has alſo been now demonſtrated, that the doctrine of an univerſal determining Providence, follows from that doctrine of neceſſity, which was proved before: and ſo, that God does deciſively, in his Providence, order all the volitions of moral agents, either by poſitive influence or permiſſion: and it being allowed, on all hands, that what God does in the affair of man's virtuous volitions, whether it be more or leſs, is by ſome poſitive influence, and not by mere permiſſion, as in the affair of a ſinful volition; if we put theſe things together, it will follow, that God's aſſiſtance or influence, muſt be determining and deciſive, or muſt be attended with a moral neceſſity of the event; and ſo, that God gives virtue, holineſs and converſion to ſinners, by an influence which determines the effect, in ſuch a manner, that the effect will infallibly follow by a moral neceſſity; which is what *Calviniſts* mean by efficacious and irreſiſtible grace.

The things, which have been ſaid, do likewiſe anſwer the chief objections againſt the doctrine of God's *univerſal* and *abſolute decree*, and afford infallible proof of this doctrine; and of the doctrine of *abſolute eternal, perſonal election* in particular. The main objections againſt theſe doctrines are, that they infer a neceſſity of the volitions of moral agents, and of the future moral ſtate and acts of men; and ſo are not conſiſtent with thoſe eternal rewards and puniſhments, which are connected with converſion and impenitence; nor can be made to agree with the reaſonableneſs and ſincerity of the precepts, calls, counſels,

warnings and expoſtulations of the word of God; or with the various methods and means of grace, which God uſes with ſinners, to bring them to repentance; and the whole of that moral government, which God exerciſes towards mankind: and that they infer an inconſiſtence between the *ſecret* and *revealed Will of God*; and make God the author of ſin. But all theſe things have been obviated in the preceding diſcourſe. And the certain truth of theſe doctrines, concerning God's eternal purpoſes, will follow from what was juſt now obſerved concerning God's univerſal Providence; how it infallibly follows from what has been proved, that God orders all events; and the volitions of moral agents amongſt others, by ſuch a deciſive diſpoſal, that the events are infallibly connected with his diſpoſal. For if God diſpoſes all events, ſo that the infallible exiſtence of the events is decided by his Providence, then he, doubtleſs, thus orders and decides things *knowingly*, and *on deſign*. God does not do what he does, nor order what he orders, accidentally or unawares; either *without*, or *beſide* his intention. And if there be a foregoing *deſign* of doing and ordering as he does, this is the ſame with a *purpoſe* or *decree*. And as it has been ſhewn, that nothing is new to God, in any reſpect, but all things are perfectly and equally in his view from eternity; hence it will follow, that his deſigns or purpoſes are not things formed anew, founded on any new views or appearances, but are all eternal purpoſes. And as it has been now ſhewn, how the doctrine of determining efficacious grace certainly follows from things proved in the foregoing diſcourſe; hence will neceſſarily follow the doctrine of *particular, eternal abſolute election*. For if men are made true ſaints, no otherwiſe than as God makes them ſo, and diſtinguiſhes them from others, by an efficacious power and influence of his, that decides and fixes the event;

and God thus makes ſome ſaints, and not others, on deſign or purpoſe, and (as has been now obſerved) no deſigns of God are new; it follows, that God thus diſtinguiſhed from others, all that ever become true ſaints, by his eternal deſign or decree. I might alſo ſhew, how God's certain foreknowledge muſt ſuppoſe an abſolute decree, and how ſuch a decree can be proved to a demonſtration from it: but that this diſcourſe may not be lengthened out too much, that muſt be omitted for the preſent.

From theſe things it will inevitably follow, that however Chriſt in ſome ſenſe may be ſaid to *die for all*, and to redeem all viſible chriſtians, yea, the whole world by his death; yet there muſt be ſomething *particular* in the deſign of his death, with reſpect to ſuch as he intended ſhould actually be ſaved thereby. As appears by what has been now ſhewn, God has the actual ſalvation or redemption of a certain number in his proper abſolute deſign, and of a certain number only; and therefore ſuch a deſign only can be proſecuted in any thing God does, in order to the ſalvation of men. God purſues a proper deſign of the ſalvation of the elect in giving Chriſt to die, and proſecutes ſuch a deſign with reſpect to no other, moſt ſtrictly ſpeaking; for it is impoſſible that God ſhould proſecute any other deſign than only ſuch as he has: he certainly does not, in the higheſt propriety and ſtrictneſs of ſpeech, purſue a deſign that he has not. And, indeed, ſuch a particularity and limitation of redemption will as infallibly follow, from the doctrine of God's foreknowledge, as from that of the decree. For it is as impoſſible, in ſtrictneſs of ſpeech, that God ſhould proſecute a deſign, or aim at a thing, which He at the ſame time moſt perfectly knows will not be accompliſhed, as that he ſhould uſe endeavours for that which is beſide his decree.

By the things which have been proved, are obviated ſome of the main objections againſt the doctrine of the infallible and neceſſary *perſeverance* of ſaints, and ſome of the main foundations of this doctrine are eſtabliſhed. The main prejudices of *Arminians* againſt this doctrine ſeem to be theſe; they ſuppoſe ſuch a neceſſary, infallible perſeverance to be repugnant to the freedom of the Will; that it muſt be owing to man's own ſelf-determining power, that he *firſt becomes* virtuous and holy; and ſo, in like manner, it muſt be left a thing contingent, to be determined by the ſame freedom of Will, whether he will *perſevere* in virtue and holineſs; and that otherwiſe his continuing ſtedfaſt in faith and obedience would not be his virtue, or at all praiſe-worthy and rewardable; nor could his perſeverance be properly the matter of divine commands, counſels and promiſes, nor his apoſtacy be properly threatened, and men warned againſt it. Whereas, we find all theſe things in Scripture: there we find ſtedfaſtneſs and perſeverance in true chriſtianity, repreſented as the virtue of the ſaints, ſpoken of as praiſe-worthy in them, and glorious rewards promiſed to it; and alſo find, that God makes it the ſubject of his commands, counſels and promiſes; and the contrary, of threatenings and warnings. But the foundation of theſe objections has been removed, in its being ſhewn that moral neceſſity and infallible certainty of events is not inconſiſtent with theſe things; and that, as to freedom of Will lying in the power of the Will to determine itſelf, there neither is any ſuch thing, nor need of any of it, in order to virtue, reward, commands, counſels, &c.

And as the doctrines of efficacious grace and abſolute election do certainly follow from things which have been proved in the preceding diſcourſe; ſo ſome of the main foundations of the doctrine of perſever-

ance, are thereby eſtabliſhed. If the beginning of true faith and holineſs, and a man's becoming a true ſaint at firſt, does not depend on the ſelf-determining power of the Will, but on the determining efficacious grace of God; it may well be argued, that it is alſo with reſpect to men's being continued ſaints, or perſevering in faith and holineſs. The converſion of a ſinner being not owing to a man's ſelf-determination, but to God's determination, and eternal election, which is abſolute, and depending on the ſovereign Will of God; and not on the free Will of man; as is evident from what has been ſaid; and it being very evident from the Scriptures, that the eternal election which there is of ſaints to faith and holineſs, is alſo an election of them to eternal ſalvation: hence their appointment to ſalvation muſt alſo be abſolute, and not depending on their contingent, ſelf-determining will. From all which it follows, that it is abſolutely fixed in God's decree, that all true ſaints ſhall perſevere to actual eternal ſalvation.

But I muſt leave all theſe things to the conſideration of the fair and impartial reader; and when he has maturely weighed them, I would propoſe it to his conſideration, whether many of the firſt reformers, and others that ſucceeded them, whom God in their day made the chief pillars of his church, and greateſt inſtruments of their deliverance from error and darkneſs, and of the ſupport of the cauſe of piety among them, have not been injured, in the contempt with which they have been treated by many late writers, for their teaching and maintaining ſuch doctrines as are commonly called *Calviniſtic*. Indeed, ſome of theſe new writers, at the ſame time that they have repreſented the doctrines of theſe ancient and eminent divines, as in the higheſt degree ridiculous, and contrary to common ſenſe, in an oſtentation of a very generous charity, have allowed

that they were honeſt well-meaning men: yea it may be ſome of them, as though it were in great condeſcenſion and compaſſion to them, have allowed, that they did pretty well for the day which they lived in, and conſidering the great diſadvantages they labored under: when, at the ſame time, their manner of ſpeaking has naturally and plainly ſuggeſted to the minds of their readers, that they were perſons, who through the lowneſs of their genius, and greatneſs of the bigotry, with which their minds were ſhackled, and thoughts confined, living in the gloomy caves of ſuperſtition, fondly embraced, and demurely and zealouſly taught the moſt abſurd, ſilly and monſtrous opinions, worthy of the greateſt contempt of gentlemen poſſeſſed of that noble and generous freedom of thought, which happily prevails in this age of light and enquiry. When, indeed, ſuch is the caſe, that we might, if ſo diſpoſed, ſpeak as big words as they, and on far better grounds. And really all the *Arminians* on earth might be challenged without arrogance or vanity, to make theſe principles of theirs, wherein they mainly differ from their fathers, whom they ſo much deſpiſe, conſiſtent with common ſenſe; yea, and perhaps to produce any doctrine ever embraced by the blindeſt bigot of the Church of Rome, or the moſt ignorant Muſſulman, or extravagant enthuſiaſt, that might be reduced to more demonſtrable inconſiſtencies, and repugnancies to common ſenſe, and to themſelves; though their inconſiſtencies indeed may not lie ſo deep, or be ſo artfully veiled by a deceitful ambiguity of words, and an indeterminate ſignification of phraſes.—I will not deny, that theſe gentlemen, many of them, are men of great abilities, and have been helped to higher attainments in philoſophy, than thoſe ancient divines, and have done great ſervice to the Church of God in ſome reſpects: but I humbly conceive,

that their differing from their fathers, with such magisterial assurance, in these points in divinity, must be owing to some other cause than superior wisdom.

It may also be worthy of consideration, whether the great alteration, which has been made in the state of things in our nation, and some other parts of the Protestant world, in this and the past age, by the exploding so generally *Calvinistic* doctrines, that is so often spoken of as worthy to be greatly rejoiced in by the friends of truth, learning and virtue, as an instance of the great increase of light in the Christian Church; I say, it may be worthy to be considered, whether this be indeed a happy change, owing to any such cause as an increase of true knowledge and understanding in things of religion; or whether there is not reason to fear, that it may be owing to some worse cause.

And I desire it may be considered, whether the boldness of some writers may not be worthy to be reflected on, who have not scrupled to say, that if these and those things are true (which yet appear to be the demonstrable dictates of reason, as well as the certain dictates of the mouth of the Most High) then God is unjust and cruel, and guilty of manifest deceit and double dealing, and the like. Yea, some have gone so far, as confidently to assert, that if any book which pretends to be Scripture, teaches such doctrines, that alone is sufficient warrant for mankind to reject it, as what cannot be the Word of God.—Some, who have not gone so far, have said, that if the Scripture seems to teach any such doctrines, so contrary to reason, we are obliged to find out some other interpretation of those texts, where such doctrines seem to be exhibited. Others express themselves yet more modestly: they express a tenderness and religious fear, lest they should receive and teach any thing that should seem to reflect on God's mor-

al character, or be a diſparagement to his methods of adminiſtration, in his moral government; and therefore expreſs themſelves as not daring to embrace ſome doctrines, though they ſeem to be delivered in Scripture, according to the more obvious and natural conſtruction of the words. But indeed it would ſhew a truer modeſty and humility, if they would more entirely rely on God's wiſdom and diſcerning, who knows infinitely better than we, what is agreeable to his own perfections, and never intended to leave theſe matters to the deciſion of the wiſdom and diſcerning of men; but by his own unerring inſtruction, to determine for us what the truth is; knowing how little our judgment is to be depended on, and how extremely prone, vain and blind men are, to err in ſuch matters.

The truth of the caſe is, that if the Scripture plainly taught the oppoſite doctrines, to thoſe that are ſo much ſtumbled at, *viz.* the *Arminian* doctrine of free Will, and others depending thereon, it would be the greateſt of all difficulties that attend the Scriptures, incomparably greater than its containing any, even the moſt myſterious of thoſe doctrines of the firſt reformers, which our late free thinkers have ſo ſupercilioufly exploded.—Indeed, it is a glorious argument of the divinity of the holy Scriptures, that they teach ſuch doctrines, which in one age and another, through the blindneſs of men's minds, and ſtrong prejudices of their hearts, are rejected, as moſt abſurd and unreaſonable, by the wiſe and great men of the world; which yet, when they are moſt carefully and ſtrictly examined, appear to be exactly agreeable to the moſt demonſtrable, certain, and natural dictates of reaſon. By ſuch things it appears, that the *fooliſhneſs of God is wiſer than men*, and God does as is ſaid in 1 Cor. i. 19, 20. *For it is written, I will deſtroy the wiſdom of the wiſe; I will bring to nothing*

the underſtanding of the prudent. Where is the wiſe! Where is the ſcribe! Where is the diſputer of this world! Hath not God made fooliſh the wiſdom of this world? And as it uſed to be in time paſt, ſo it is probable it will be in time to come, as it is there written, in ver. 27, 28, 29. *But God hath choſen the fooliſh things of the world, to confound the wiſe: and God hath choſen the weak things of the world, to confound the things that are mighty; and baſe things of the world, and things which are deſpiſed, hath God choſen: yea, and things which are not, to bring to nought things that are; that no fleſh ſhould glory in his preſence.* Amen.

THE

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[N. B. The capital P. signifies the *Part*; Sect. the *Section*; Concl. the *Conclusion*; and the small p. the *Page*; where the things here specified are to be found.]

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REMARKS

ON THE

ESSAYS on the PRINCIPLES of MORALITY and NATURAL RELIGION,

In a LETTER to a Minister of the CHURCH of SCOTLAND:

By the Rev. Mr. JONATHAN EDWARDS, President of the College of NEW-JERSEY, and Author of the late INQUIRY into the MODERN NOTIONS of the FREEDOM of WILL.

REV. SIR,

THE intimations you have given me of the use which has, by some, been made of what I have written on the *Freedom of the Will*, &c. to vindicate what is said on the subject of liberty and necessity, by the Author of the *Essays on the Principles of Morality and Natural Religion*, has occasioned my reading this Author's Essay on that subject, with particular care and attention. And I think it must be evident to every one, that has read both his *Essay* and my *Inquiry*, that our schemes are exceeding reverse from each other. The wide difference appears particularly in the following things.

This author supposes, that such a necessity takes place with respect to all men's actions, as is inconsistent with liberty,* and plainly denies that men have any liberty in acting. Thus in p. 168, after he had been speaking of the necessity of our determinations, as connected with motives, he concludes

* P. 160, 161, 164, 165, and many other places.

with saying, "In short, if motives are not under our power or direction, which is confessedly the fact, we can at bottom have——NO LIBERTY." Whereas, I have abundantly expressed it as my mind, that man, in his moral actions, has true liberty; and that the moral necessity, which universally takes place, is not in the least inconsistent with any thing that is properly called liberty, and with the utmost liberty that can be desired, or that can possibly exist or be conceived of.*

I find that some are apt to think, that in that kind of moral necessity of men's volitions, which I suppose to be universal, at least some degree of liberty is denied; that though it be true I allow a sort of liberty, yet those who maintain a self-determining power in the Will, and a liberty of contingence and indifference, hold an higher sort of freedom than I do: but I think this is certainly a great mistake.

Liberty, as I have explained it, in p. 38, and other places, is *the power, opportunity, or advantage, that any one has to do as he pleases, or conducting* IN ANY RESPECT, *according to his pleasure;* without considering how his pleasure comes to be as it is. It is demonstrable, and, I think, has been demonstrated, that no necessity of men's volitions that I maintain, is inconsistent with this liberty: and I think it is impossible for any one to rise higher in his conceptions of liberty than this: If any imagine they desire higher, and that they conceive of a higher and greater liberty than this, they are deceived, and delude themselves with confused ambiguous words, instead of ideas. If any one should here say, "Yes, I conceive of a freedom above and beyond the liberty a man has of conducting in any respect as he pleases,

* *Inquiry*, P. 38—43, 186, 187, 278—288, 300, 307, 326—335.

viz. a liberty of *chooſing* as he pleaſes." Such an one, if he reflected, would either bluſh or laugh at his own inſtance. For, is not chooſing as he pleaſes, conducting, IN SOME RESPECT, according to his pleaſure, and ſtill without determining how he came by that pleaſure? If he ſays, "Yes, I came by that pleaſure by my own choice." If he be a man of common ſenſe, by this time he will ſee his own abſurdity: for he muſt needs ſee that his notion or conception, even of this liberty, does not contain any judgment or conception how he comes by that choice, which firſt determines his pleaſure or which originally fixed his own will reſpecting the affair. Or if any ſhall ſay, "That a man exerciſes liberty in this, even in determining his own choice, but not as he pleaſes, or not in conſequence of any choice, preference, or inclination of his own, but by a determination ariſing contingently out of a ſtate of abſolute indifference;" this is not riſing higher in his conception of liberty: as ſuch a determination of the Will would not be a voluntary determination of it. Surely he that places liberty in a power of doing ſomething not according to his own choice, or from his choice, has not a higher notion of it, than he that places it in doing as he pleaſes, or acting from his own election. If there were a power in the mind to determine itſelf, but not by its choice or according to its pleaſure, what advantage would it give? And what liberty, worth contending for, would be exerciſed in it? Therefore no *Arminian*, *Pelagian*, or *Epicurean*, can riſe higher in his conceptions of liberty, than the notion of it which I have explained: which notion is apparently, perfectly conſiſtent with the whole of that neceſſity of men's actions, which I ſuppoſe takes place. (And I ſcruple not to ſay, it is beyond all their wits to invent a higher notion, or form a higher imagination of liberty; let them talk

of *sovereignty of the Will, self-determining power, self-motion, self-direction, arbitrary decision, liberty* ad utrumvis, *power of choosing differently in given cases*, &c. &c. as long as they will. It is apparent that these men, in their strenuous affirmation, and dispute about these things, aim at they know not what, fighting for something they have no conception of, substituting a number of confused unmeaning words, instead of things, and instead of thoughts They may be challenged clearly to explain what they would have: they never can answer the challenge.

The Author of the *Essays*, through his whole Essay on Liberty and Necessity, goes on that supposition, that, in order to the being of real liberty, a man must have a freedom that is opposed to moral necessity: and yet he supposes, p. 175, that *such a liberty must signify a power in the mind of acting without and against motives, a power of acting without any view, purpose, or design, and even of acting in contradiction to our own desires and aversions, and to all our principles of action; and is an absurdity altogether inconsistent with a rational nature.* Now, who ever imagined such a liberty as this, a higher sort or degree of freedom, than a liberty of following one's own views and purposes, and acting agreeable to his own inclinations and passions? Who will ever reasonably suppose that liberty, which is an absurdity altogether inconsistent with a rational nature, to be a kind of liberty above that which is consistent with the nature of a rational, intelligent, designing agent?

The Author of the *Essays* seems to suppose such a necessity to take place, as is inconsistent with some supposable POWER OF ARBITRARY CHOICE;* or that there is some liberty conceivable, whereby men's own actions might be more PROPERLY IN THEIR POWER,† and by which events might be more DEPENDENT ON

* P. 169. † P. 191, 195, 197, 206.

OURSELVES;* contrary to what I ſuppoſe to be evident in my *Inquiry*.† What way can be imagined, of our actions being more *in our power, from ourſelves*, or *depend on ourſelves*, than their being from our power to fulfil our own choice, to act from our own inclination, purſue our own views, and execute our own deſigns? Certainly, to be able to act thus, is as properly having our actions in our power, and dependent on ourſelves, as a being liable to be the ſubjects of acts and events contingently and fortuitouſly, *without deſire, view purpoſe or deſign, or any principle of action* within ourſelves; as we muſt be according to this Author's own declared ſenſe, if our actions are performed with that liberty that is oppoſed to moral neceſſity.

This Author ſeems every where to ſuppoſe, that neceſſity, moſt properly ſo called, attends all men's actions; and that the terms *neceſſary, unavoidable, impoſſible*, &c. are equally applicable to the caſe of moral and natural neceſſity. In p. 173, he ſays, *The idea* of neceſſary *and* unavoidable, *equally agrees, both to moral and phyſical neceſſity*. And in p. 184, *All things that fall out in the natural and moral world are alike neceſſary*. P. 174, *This inclination and choice is* unavoidably *cauſed or occaſioned by the prevailing motive. In this lies the neceſſity of our actions, that, in ſuch circumſtances, it was* impoſſible *we* could *act otherwiſe*. He often expreſſes himſelf in like manner elſewhere, ſpeaking in ſtrong terms of men's actions as *unavoidable*, what they *cannot* forbear, having *no power* over their own actions, the order of them being *unalterably* fixed and *inſeparably* linked together, *&c* ‡

On the contrary, I have largely declared, that the connexion between antecedent things and conſequent ones, which takes place with regard to the acts

* P. 183. † P. 305, 396. ‡ P. 180, 188, 193, 194, 195, 197, 198, 199, 205, 206.

of men's Wills, which is called moral neceſſity, is called by the name of *neceſſity* improperly; and that all ſuch terms as *muſt cannot, impoſſible, unable, irreſiſtible, unavoidable, invincible, &c.* when applied here, are not applied in their proper ſignification, and are either uſed nonſenſically, and with perfect inſignificance, or in a ſenſe quite diverſe from their original and proper meaning, and their uſe in common ſpeech:* and, that ſuch a neceſſity as attends the acts of men's Wills, is more properly called *certainty*, than *neceſſity*; it being no other than the certain connexion between the ſubject and predicate of the propoſition which affirms their exiſtence.†

Agreeable to what is obſerved in my *Inquiry*,‡ I think it is evidently owing to a ſtrong prejudice in perſons minds, ariſing from an inſenſible habitual perverſion and miſapplication of ſuch-like terms as *neceſſary, impoſſible, unable, unavoidable, invincible, &c.* that they are ready to think, that to ſuppoſe a certain connexion of men's volitions, without any foregoing motives or inclinations, or any preceding moral influence whatſoever, is truly and properly to ſuppoſe ſuch a ſtrong irrefragable chain of cauſes and effects, as ſtands in the way of, and makes utterly vain, oppoſite deſires and endeavours, like immovable and impenetrable mountains of braſs; and impedes our liberty like walls of adamant, gates of braſs, and bars of iron: whereas, all ſuch repreſentations ſuggeſt ideas as far from the truth, as the Eaſt is from the Weſt. Nothing that I maintain, ſuppoſes that men are at all hindered by any fatal neceſſity, from doing, and even willing and chooſing as they pleaſe, with full freedom; yea with the higheſt degree of liberty that ever was thought of, or that

* *Inquiry*, P. 17—27, 30, 31, 32, 33, 34, 215, 267—271, 274, 81—285, 367, 368. † *Inquiry*, P. 21—23.
‡ P. 267,—271.

ever could poſſibly enter into the heart of any man to conceive. I know it is in vain to endeavour to make ſome perſons believe this, or at leaſt fully and ſteadily to believe it: for if it be demonſtrated to them, ſtill the old prejudice remains, which has been long fixed by the uſe of the terms *neceſſary*, *muſt*, *cannot*, *impoſſible*, &c. the aſſociation with theſe terms of certain ideas, inconſiſtent with liberty, is not broken; and the judgment is powerfully warped by it; as a thing that has been long bent and grown ſtiff, if it be ſtraightened, will return to its former curvity again and again.

The Author of the *Eſſays* moſt manifeſtly ſuppoſes that if men had the truth concerning the real neceſſity of all their actions clearly in view, they would not appear to themſelves, or one another, as at all praiſe-worthy or culpable, or under any moral obligation, or accountable for their actions :* which ſuppoſes, that men are not to be blamed or praiſed for any of their actions, and are not under any obligations, nor are truly accountable for any thing they do, by reaſon of this neceſſity; which is very contrary to what I have endeavoured to prove, throughout the *third part* of my *Inquiry*. I humbly conceive it is there ſhewn, that this is ſo far from the truth, that the moral neceſſity of men's actions, which truly take place, is requiſite to the being of virtue and vice, or any thing praiſe-worthy or culpable: that the liberty of indifference and contingence, which is advanced in oppoſition to that neceſſity, is inconſiſtent with the being of theſe; as it would ſuppoſe that men are not determined in what they do, by any virtuous or vicious principles, nor act from any motives, intentions or aims whatſoever; or have any end, either good or bad, in acting. And is it not remarkable, that this Author ſhould ſuppoſe, that, in order to men's actions

* P. 207, 209, and other places.

truly having any desert, they must be performed *without any view, purpose, design, or desire*, or *any principle of action*, or any thing *agreeable to a rational nature?* As it will appear that he does, if we compare p. 206, 207, with p. 175.

The Author of the *Essays* supposes, that God has deeply implanted in man's nature, a strong and invincible apprehension, or feeling, as he calls it, of a liberty, and contingence, of his own actions, opposite to that necessity which truly attends them; and which in truth does not agree with real fact *a*, is not agreeable to strict philosophic truth *b*, is contradictory to the truth of things *c*, and which truth contradicts *d*, not tallying with the real plan *e*: and that therefore such feelings are deceitful *f*, are in reality of the delusive kind *g*. He speaks of them as a wise delusion *h*, as nice artificial feelings, merely that conscience may have a commanding power *i*: meaning plainly, that these feelings are a cunning artifice of the Author of Nature, to make men believe they are free, when they are not *k*. He supposes that, by these feelings, the moral world has a disguised appearance *l*. And other things of this kind he says. He supposes that all self-approbation, and all remorse of conscience, all commendation or condemnation of ourselves or others, all sense of desert, and all that is connected with this way of thinking, all the ideas, which at present are suggested by the words *ought*, *should*, arise from this delusion and would entirely vanish without it *m*.

All which is very contrary to what I have abundantly insisted on and endeavoured to demonstrate in my *Inquiry*; where I have largely shewn, that it is agreeable to the natural sense of mankind, that the moral necessity or certainty that attends men's ac-

a P. 200. *b* P. 152. *c* P. 183. *d* P. 186. *e* P. 205. *f* P. 203, 204, 211. *g* P. 183. *h* P. 209. *i* P. 211. *k* P. 153. *l* P. 214. *m* P. 160, 194, 199, 205, 206, 209.

tions, is consistent with praise and blame, reward and punishment *a*; and that it is agreeable to our natural notions, that moral evil, with its desert of dislike and abhorrence, and all its other ill-deservings, consists in a certain deformity in the nature of the dispositions and acts of the heart, and not in the evil of something else, diverse from these, supposed to be their cause or occasion *b*.

I might well ask here, whether any one is to be found in the world of mankind, who is conscious to a sense or feeling, naturally and deeply rooted in his mind, that, in order to a man's performing any action that is praise or blame-worthy, he must exercise a liberty that implies and signifies a power of acting without any motive, view, design, desire, or principle of action? For such a liberty, this Author supposes, that must be which is opposed to moral necessity, as I have already observed once and again.—Supposing a man should actually do good, independent of desire, aim, inducement, principle or end, is it a dictate of invincible natural sense, that his act is more meritorious or praise-worthy, than if he had performed it for some *good end*, and had been governed in it by *good principles* and *motives?* and so I might ask, on the contrary, with respect to evil actions *c*.

The Author of the *Essays* supposes that the liberty without necessity, which we have a natural feeling of, implies *contingence:* and, speaking of this contingence, he sometimes calls it by the name of *chance*. And it is evident, that his notion of it, or rather what he says about it, implies things happening *loosely*,

a Inquiry Part IV. Sect. 4. throughout. *b Idem*, Part IV. Sect. 1. throughout, and P. 365—366. *c* See this Matter illustrated in my *Inquiry*, Part IV. Sect. 4. especially, P. 279—281.

fortuitouſly, by *accident*, and *without a cauſe*.* Now I conceive the ſlighteſt reflection may be ſufficient to ſatisfy any one, that ſuch a contingence of men's actions, according to our natural ſenſe, is ſo far from being eſſential to the morality or merit of thoſe actions, that it would deſtroy it; and that, on the contrary, the dependence of our actions on ſuch cauſes, as inward inclinations, incitements and ends, is eſſential to the being of it. Natural ſenſe teaches men, when they ſee any thing done by others of a good or evil tendency, to inquire what their intention was; what principles and views they were moved by, in order to judge how far they are to be juſtified or condemned; and not to determine, that, in order to their being approved or blamed at all, the action muſt be performed altogether fortuitouſly, proceeding from nothing, ariſing from no cauſe. Concerning this matter, I have fully expreſſed my mind in the *Inquiry*.†

If the liberty, which we have a natural ſenſe of as neceſſary to deſert, conſiſts in the mind's ſelf-determination, without being determined by previous inclination or motive, then indifference is eſſential to it, yea abſolute indifference; as is obſerved in my *Inquiry*.‡ But men naturally have no notion of any ſuch liberty as this, as eſſential to the morality or demerit of their actions; but, on the contrary, ſuch a liberty, if it were poſſible, would be inconſiſtent with our natural notions of deſert, as is largely ſhown in the *Inquiry*.§ If it be agreeable to natural ſenſe, that men muſt be indifferent in determining their own actions; then, according to the ſame, the more they are determined by inclination, either good or bad, the leſs they have of deſert: the more good ac-

* P. 156, 157, 158, 159, 177, 178, 181, 183, 184, 185.
† P. 239—241, 246, 279, 280, and other places.
‡ P. 83—85.
§ Eſpecially in Part III. Sect. 6, and 7.

ions are performed from good diſpoſition, the leſs praiſe-worthy; and the more evil deeds are from evil diſpoſitions, the leſs culpable; and, in general, the more men's actions are from their hearts, the leſs they are to be commended or condemned: which all muſt know is very contrary to natural ſenſe.

Moral neceſſity is owing to the power and government of the inclination of the heart, either habitual or occaſional, excited by motive: but, according to natural and common ſenſe, the more a man does any thing with full inclination of heart, the more is it to be charged to his account for his condemnation, if it be an ill action, and the more to be aſcribed to him for his praiſe, if it be good.

If the mind were determined to evil actions by contingence, from a ſtate of indifference, then either there would be no fault in them, or elſe the fault would be in being ſo perfectly indifferent, that the mind was equally liable to a bad or good determination. And, if this indifference be liberty, then the very eſſence of the blame or fault would lie in the liberty itſelf, or the wickedneſs would, primarily and ſummarily, lie in being a free agent. If there were no fault in being indifferent, then there would be no fault in the determination's being agreeable to ſuch a ſtate of indifference: that is, there could no fault be reaſonably found with this, *viz.* that oppoſite determinations actually happen to take place *indifferently*, ſometimes good and ſometimes bad, as contingence governs and decides. And if it be a fault to be indifferent to good and evil, then ſuch indifference is no indifference to good and evil, but is a determination to evil, or to a fault; and ſuch an indifferent diſpoſition would be an evil, faulty diſpoſition, tendency or determination of mind. So inconſiſtent are theſe notions of liberty, as eſſential to praiſe or blame.

The Author of the *Eſſays* ſuppoſes men's natural deluſive ſenſe of a liberty of contingence, to be, in truth, the foundation of all the labour, care and induſtry of mankind;* and that if men's *practical ideas had been formed on the plan of univerſal neceſſity, the* ignava ratio, *the inactive doctrine of the Stoics, would have followed; and that there would have been no* ROOM *for forethought about futurity, or any ſort of induſtry and care:*† plainly implying, that, in this caſe, men would ſee and know that all their induſtry and care ſignified nothing, was in vain, and to no purpoſe, or of no benefit; events being fixed in an irrefragable chain, and not at all DEPENDING on their care and endeavour; as he explains himſelf, particularly in the inſtance of men's uſe of means to prolong life:‡ not only very contrary to what I largely maintain in my *Inquiry*,§ but alſo very inconſiſtently with his own ſcheme, in what he ſuppoſes of the ends for which God has ſo deeply implanted this deceitful feeling in man's nature; in which he manifeſtly ſuppoſes men's care and induſtry not to be in vain and of no benefit, but of great uſe, yea of abſolute neceſſity, in order to the obtaining the moſt important ends and neceſſary purpoſes of human life, and to fulfil the ends of action to the BEST ADVANTAGE; as he largely declares.‖ Now, how ſhall theſe things be reconciled? That, if men had *a clear view of real truth*, they would ſee that there was *no* ROOM for their care and induſtry, becauſe they would ſee it to be in vain, and of no benefit; and yet that God, by having a clear view of real truth, ſees that their being excited to care and induſtry, will be of excellent uſe to mankind, and greatly for the benefit of the world, yea abſolutely neceſſary in order to it: and that therefore the great wiſdom and goodneſs of God to men appears, in art-

* P. 184. † P. 189. ‡ P. 184, 185. § Eſpecially Part IV. Sect. 5. ‖ P. 188--192, and in many other places.

fully contriving to put them on care and industry for their good, which good could not be obtained without them; and yet both these things are maintained at once, and in the same sentences and words by this Author. The very reason he gives, why God has put this deceitful feeling into men, contradicts and destroys itself; that God in his great goodness to men gave them such a deceitful feeling, because it was very useful and necessary for them, and greatly for their benefit, or excites them to care and industry for their own good, which care and industry is useful and necessary to that end: and yet the very thing that this great benefit of care and industry is given as a reason for, is God's deceiving men in this very point, in making them think their care and industry to be of great benefit to them, when indeed it is of none at all; and if they saw the real truth, they would see all their endeavours to be wholly useless, that there was NO ROOM for them, and that the event does not at all DEPEND upon them *a*.

And besides, what this author says, plainly implies (as appears by what has been already observed) that it is necessary men should be deceived, by being made to believe that future events are contingent, and their own future actions free, with such a freedom, as signifies that their actions are not the fruit of their own desires, or designs, but altogether contingent, fortuitous, and without a cause. But how should a notion of liberty, consisting in accident or loose chance, encourage care and industry? I should think think it would rather entirely discourage every thing of this nature. For surely, if our actions do not depend on our endeavours, flowing from our desires and designs. This Author himself seems to suppose, that if men had, indeed, such a liberty of contingence, it would render all endeavours to determine

a P. 188, 189, &c.

or move men's future volitions, in vain: he says, that, in this case, *to exhort, to instruct, to promise, or to threaten, would be to no purpose.** Why? Because, (as he himself gives the reason) *then our Will would be capricious and arbitrary, and we should be thrown loose altogether, and our arbitrary power could do us good or ill only by accident.* But if such a loose fortuitous state would render vain other endeavours upon us, for the same reason would it make useless our endeavours on ourselves: for events that are truly contingent and accidental, and altogether loose from, and independent of, all foregoing causes, are independent on every foregoing cause within ourselves, as well as in others.

I suppose that it is so far from being true, that our minds are naturally possessed with a notion of such liberty as this, so strongly, that it is impossible to root it out; that indeed men have no such notion of liberty at all, and that it is utterly impossible, by any means whatsoever, to implant or introduce such a notion into the mind. As no such notions as imply self-contradiction and self-abolition can subsist in the mind, as I have shewn in my *Inquiry*;† I think a mature sensible consideration of the matter, sufficient to satisfy any one, that even the greatest and most learned advocates themselves for liberty of indifference and self-determination, have no such notion; and that indeed they mean something wholly inconsistent with, and directly subversive of, what they strenuously affirm, and earnestly contend for. By a man's having a power of determining his own Will, they plainly mean a power of determining his Will, as he pleases, or as he chooses; which supposes that the mind has a choice, prior to its going about to confirm any action or determination to it. And if they mean that they determine even the original or

* P. 166, 198, 199. † P. 238, 239. See also P. 46, 53, 54, 63, 70, 73, 170—174, 260, 261, 275—278.

prime choice, by their own pleaſure or choice, as the thing that cauſes and directs it; I ſcruple not moſt boldly to affirm, that they ſpeak they know not what, and that of which they have no manner of idea; becauſe no ſuch contradictory notion can come into, or have a moment's ſubſiſtence in, the mind of any man living, as an original or firſt choice being cauſed, or brought into being, by choice. After all, they ſay, they have no higher or other conception of liberty, than that vulgar notion of it, which I contend for, *viz.* a man's having power or opportunity to do as he chooſes: or if they had a notion that every act of choice was determined by choice, yet it would deſtroy their notion of the contingence of choice; for then no one act of choice would ariſe contingently, or from a ſtate of indifference, but every individual act, in all the ſeries, would ariſe from foregoing bias or preference, and from a cauſe predetermining and fixing its exiſtence, which introduces at once ſuch a chain of cauſes and effects, each preceding link deciſively fixing the following, as they would by all means avoid.

And ſuch kind of deluſion and ſelf-contradiction as this, does not ariſe in men's minds by nature: it is not owing to any natural feeling which God has ſtrongly fixed in the mind and nature of man; but to falſe philoſophy, and ſtrong prejudice, from a deceitful abuſe of words. It is *artificial;* not in the ſenſe of the Author of the *Eſſays*, ſuppoſing it to be a deceitful artifice of God; but artificial as oppoſed to natural, and as owing to an artificial deceitful management of terms, to darken and confound the mind. Men have no ſuch thing when they firſt begin to exerciſe reaſon; but muſt have a great deal of time to blind themſelves, with metaphyſical confuſion, before they can embrace, and reſt in ſuch definitions of liberty as are given, and imagine they underſtand them.

On the whole, I humbly conceive, that whoſoever will give himſelf the trouble of weighing what I have offered to conſideration in my *Inquiry*, muſt be ſenſible, that ſuch a moral neceſſity of men's actions as I maintain, is not at all inconſiſtent with any liberty that any creature has, or can have, as a free, accountable, moral agent, and ſubject of moral government; and that this moral neceſſity is ſo far from being inconſiſtent with praiſe and blame, and the benefit and uſe of men's own care and labour, that, on the contrary, it implies the very ground and reaſon, why men's actions are to be aſcribed to them as their own, in that manner as to infer deſert, praiſe and blame, approbation and remorſe of conſcience, reward and puniſhment; and that it eſtabliſhes the moral ſyſtem of the univerſe, and God's moral government, in every reſpect, with the power and uſe of motives, exhortations, commands, counſels, promiſes, and threatenings; and the uſe and benefit of endeavours, care and induſtry: and that therefore there is no need that the ſtrict philoſophic truth ſhould be at all concealed from men; no danger in *contemplation* and *profound diſcovery* in theſe things. So far from this, that the truth in this matter is of vaſt importance, and extremely needful to be known; and that the more clearly and perfectly the real fact is known, and the more conſtantly it is in view, the better; and particularly, that the clear and full knowledge of that, which is the true ſyſtem of the univerſe, in theſe reſpects, would greatly eſtabliſh the doctrines which teach the true Chriſtian ſcheme of Divine Adminiſtration in the city of God, and the Goſpel of Jeſus Chriſt, in its moſt important articles; and that theſe things never can be well eſtabliſhed, and the oppoſite errors, ſo ſubverſive of the whole Goſpel, which at this day ſo greatly and generally prevail, be well confuted, or the arguments

by which they are maintained, anſwered, till theſe points are ſettled: while this is not done, it is, to me, beyond doubt, that the friends of thoſe great Goſpel Truths, will but poorly maintain their controverſy with the adverſaries of thoſe truths: they will be obliged often to dodge, ſhuffle, hide, and turn their backs; and the latter will have a ſtrong fort, from whence they never can be driven, and weapons to uſe, which thoſe whom they oppoſe will find no ſhield to ſcreen themſelves from; and they will always puzzle, confound, and keep under the friends of ſound doctrine; and glory, and vaunt themſelves in their advantage over them; and carry their affairs with an high hand, as they have done already for a long time paſt.

I conclude, Sir, with aſking your pardon for troubling you with ſo much ſaid in vindication of myſelf from the imputation of advancing a ſcheme of neceſſity, of a like nature with that of the Author of the *Eſſays on the Principles of Morality and Natural Religion.* Conſidering that what I have ſaid is not only in vindication of myſelf, but, as I think, of the moſt important articles of moral philoſophy and religion; I truſt in what I know of your candour, that you will excuſe,

Your obliged friend and brother,

J. EDWARDS.

STOCKBRIDGE,
July 25, 1757.

FINIS.

Date Due

O 22 '42

Je 25 '43

My 8 '47

DE 1 '47

AP 1 8 '52

MY 5 - '52

MY 19 '52

JE 2 - '52